The National
Future Farmer
October-November, 1988

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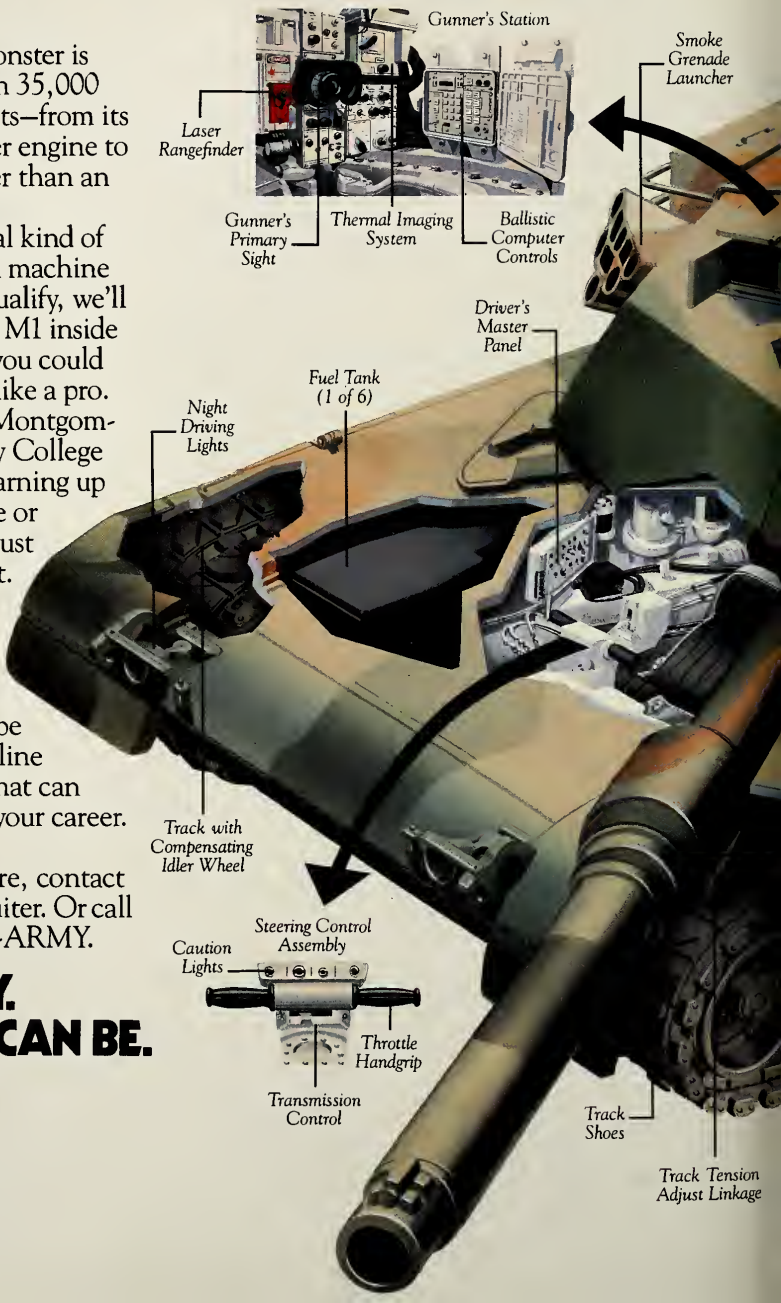

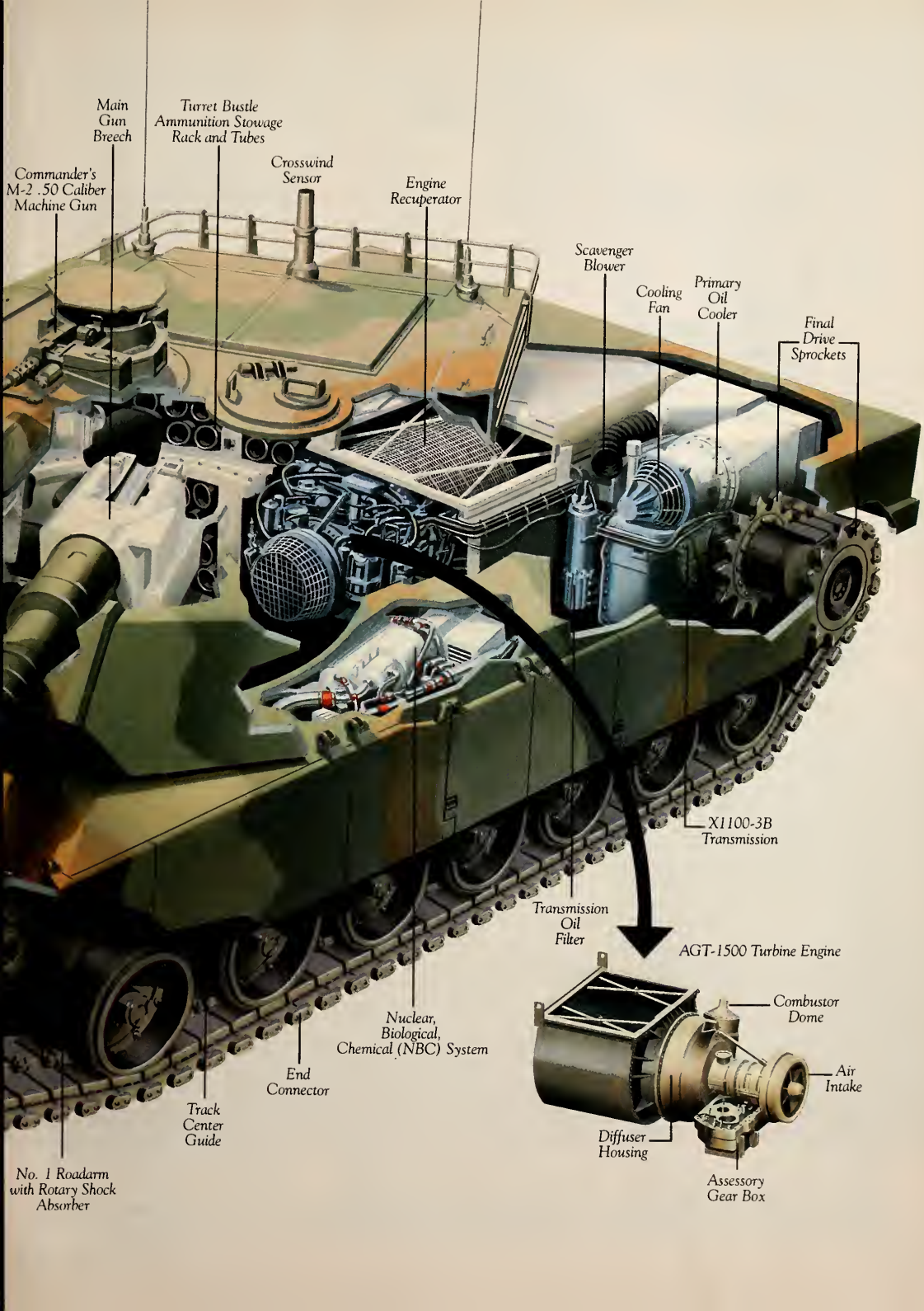
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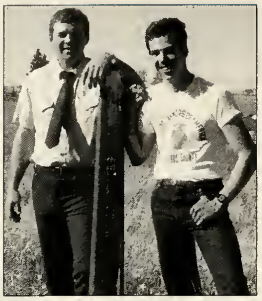

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On the cover, Mark Knudson of Crosby, North Dakota, poses with his parents, Marilyn and Jerome, next to one of 21 Knudson tractors engineered and built by his father. Today, that inventive spirit is at the heart of Mark's farming operation. Photo by Andrew Markwart.

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The Bottom Line

Delegates to the 61st National FFA Convention will have an opportunity to make several key decisions about FFA's future. No less than 19 amendments to the constitution and bylaws are being put to a vote.

The amendments are the results of a two-year study by a special committee. Hearings were held throughout the country to get the best thinking from a lot of people interested in vocational agriculture and the FFA.

These amendments were reviewed in detail by the board of directors and national officers at their July meeting. They were printed in the *Between Issues* newsletter mailed to your FFA advisor recently. You may want to get a copy of the newsletter and see just what changes are being considered.

A complete review is not possible in this space but here are some examples:

One change would remove the words "Vocational Agriculture" from the emblem and replace them with "Agricultural Education."

Another would take the word "farmer" from the degrees. Thus the "State Farmer Degree" would become "State FFA Degree."

Supervised occupational experience (SOE) would become supervised agricultural experience (SAE).

To have an FFA chapter, a school must first have an agriculture department. Some feel the amendments would help change FFA's image and make an agricultural program with FFA more appealing to more students and school officials interested in career opportunities in agribusiness and related fields of agriculture. This would allow FFA to serve more members nationwide.

High school courses in agriculture have changed significantly in the more successful agriculture departments. Agriscience, biotechnology, computers— are good examples of the changes that have occurred. Too often we hear the story that some departments that did not upgrade their courses have died.

A lot of people will be watching to see what the delegates will do with the amendments during the National Convention, November 10-12. We will bring you the highlights in the next issue.

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News In Brief

Made For Excellence

A four-member team consisting of former national officers and Washington Conference Program staff will be presenting Made for Excellence conferences during the 1988-89 school year. The conferences focus on the personal development of members and will be conducted by the National FFA Organization in cooperation with 11 state associations. For more information, contact Marshall Stewart at the National FFA Center, (703) 360-3600, ext. 252.

States and Dates of Made for Excellence conferences

Minnesota	Sept. 17-18, 1988
Louisiana	September 24-25
Arizona	October 14-15
Iowa	October 29-30
Ohio	December 3-4
Georgia	December 10-11
Massachusetts	January 7-8, 1989
Florida	January 14-15
California	January 21-22
California	January 28-29
Kansas	January 28-29
Wisconsin	February 4-5
North Carolina	February 11-12

Photo Contest Oct. 1

Over 9,000 FFA and 4-H members have requested information about the photo contest sponsored by The New Northrup King in association with the upcoming photo-essay book, *One Day in the Country/USA.*

According to the book's producer/director, Richard Brooks, the responses have come mostly from FFA members interested in winning the top prize of a $1,000 scholarship or $1,000 U.S. Savings Bond.

Only 35mm color transparencies (slides) taken October 1 will be accepted per contestant. Contestants are also being asked to record the names and addresses of the people featured in their slides.

For complete details on the contest, FFA members should call the contest hotline number (1-800-445-0956) at The New Northrup King.

Augenstein Remembered

Larry Augenstein of Poway, California, who was a member of the original 1928-29 national officer team, passed away recently. In 1928, Augenstein served as a delegate from Ohio at the Organizational Meeting of the Future Farmers of America, was elected national vice-president and was selected as one of the first ten American Farmers.

An energetic supporter of FFA, Augenstein attended 47 of the past 60 national FFA conventions. In the 1960's, he was recognized as one of the leading purebred Guernsey cattle breeders in the United States.

Beam Us Down

National FFA Officers Bill Hollis, Kevin Ochsner, Terri Hames, Kelli Evans, Dunn LeDoux and Mickey McCall proudly display the television satellite dish that has been installed at the FFA Center by AGRI-SAT of Belmont, Wisconsin. The dish and a receiver were donated to FFA by Zenith Electronics Corporation and is the same dish Zenith is offering through a special program to make satellite dishes and receivers available to FFA chapters at substantial discounts.

Chapters interested in learning more about the dish program should contact Darlene Jablon, Zenith Corporation, 1-800-255-6790. For information about viewing the 1988 National FFA Convention via satellite transmission, please see related story on page 41.

Photo by Bill Stagg

Now that you've joined the FFA, you can claim several deductions.

Save $200.

Yamaha Terrapro PTO.

Coupon discount will be deducted from dealer's best price. Discount available to Future Farmers of America members only. Proof of membership must be presented at time of sale. Coupon valid through December 31, 1988. All vehicles subject to prior sale, all applicable taxes, licenses and fees.

Save $100.

Yamaha mower or hand sprayer.

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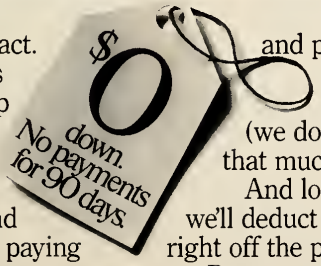
Four, to be exact.

Which means that with the help of a Yamaha Terrapro with PTO, you can do a whole lot around the farm without paying a whole lot.

Just go to your local Yamaha dealer (you don't need to take the above coupons with you, we trust you) and present proof that you're an FFA member (we don't trust you that much).



And lo and behold, we'll deduct the savings right off the purchase price.

Pretty exciting, huh? Bet you're taking the old wallet out of your pocket even as we speak. But hold on, there's no need.

Until the end of the year, you don't have to put any money down*or make any payments at all for 90 days. And this offer is good for anyone on every one of our ATV's, not just on the Terrapro.

So see us right away. When it comes to our friends in the FFA, it's the least we can do.

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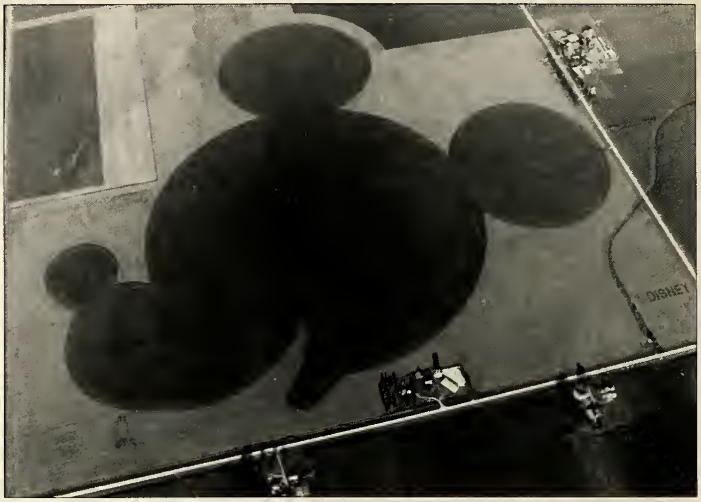
Looking Ahead

Field Mouse

A 520-acre silhouette of Mickey Mouse was cultivated this year by the Richard Pitzenberger family, operators of the Walter Buehlje farm in Sheffield, Iowa, for The Walt Disney Company. "Kernel" Mickey Mouse contains 220 acres of corn for the head and about 300 acres of oats which frame the silhouette.

This piece of agricultural art was designed to be seen from an altitude of 30,000 feet and planted in an area frequently crossed by air travelers. Pitzenberger predicted, "When the seasons change, so will the colors. It's really going to be something." His son, Ted added, "It's like bringing a little bit of Disney to the prairie."



Groundwater Movie

A new film titled "Groundwater and Agricultural Chemicals: Understanding the Issues," is available on a free-loan basis for people interested in exploring the groundwater contamination issue.

Sponsored by the American Soybean Association and National Corn Growers Association, the program is being made available to the public through the efforts of Monsanto Company. Narrated by Hugh Downs, the 18-minute feature examines the issue and reviews the way farmer and dealers can minimize the risk of pesticide contamination of groundwater.

The program (#22808) may be ordered in VHS and 16mm film formats from Modern Talking Picture Service, Scheduling Center, 5000 Park Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33709. Please include preferred viewing dates and choice of format.

Farm Population Drops

The rural farm population dropped by about one million between 1980 and 1987 to 4,986,000, according to a report by the Commerce Department's Census Bureau and the Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service.

The farm population declined an average of 2.5 percent per year during the 1980's, continuing a long downward trend. About one in 49 persons, or two percent of the U.S. population, lived on a farm in 1987, compared with 30 percent in 1920.

Steel Shot Required

Water fowl hunters will be required to use nontoxic (steel) shot in zones in 46 states this fall. "By complying with nontoxic shot regulations, hunters are helping to eliminate the needless loss of waterfowl from lead poisoning," noted Frank Dunkle, director of the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "This is especially important now that our duck populations are being hit so hard by drought."

Nontoxic shot will be required for waterfowl and coot hunting nationwide by the 1991-92 hunting season. This fall, nontoxic shot regulation will apply in every state except Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire and West Virginia. Waterfowl hunters should check state hunting regulations carefully to be sure they know where nontoxic shot is required.

Koreans Study Checkoffs

Recently a nine-member Korean Checkoff Study Team from South Korea toured the U.S. studying American farmers' checkoff systems.

Representing the animal agriculture sector of Korea, the group studied U.S. farmers' self-help programs through the check-off systems and observed consumer promotion for agricultural products by farmer-raised funds.

"We want a national mandatory checkoff program for all animal sectors," said Young In Park, team manager and U.S. Feed Grains Council director for Korea.

Per capita consumption of meat milk and eggs in Korea still remains relatively low compared to other developed countries. According to Park, there is a need to educate the consumers on nutrition and preparation of animal protein-based foods as well as improve the production, processing and distribution systems of the products.

Cherry Pecan Sausage?

When Cindy Pleva of Cedar, Michigan, was named 1987 National Cherry Queen, she convinced her father, Ray, to incorporate cherries into his sausage-making business. Ray responded with an original "Cherry Pecan Sausage" that contained almost one-third cherries.

Customers who though it would be a novel idea to try the sausage soon found that it didn't bother their stomach as much as regular sausage. A sample was sent to a research lab and the results confirmed the customer's praises.

Cherries contain high levels of the enzymes lipase and amylaze, which help break down pork tissue and fat during cooking. The blend of ingredients was not only good visibility for the cherry industry, but produced a sausage that was easy to digest, low in fat and high in protein.

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Gates Big A/Gates hydraulic hoses, made while you wait at many Big A stores, will keep your equipment working.

BIG A Big A Batteries provide complete, high-quality coverage for trucks, tractors, and agricultural equipment—as well as consistent cranking power for even the largest engines.

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Mailbag

No More FFA

I will be a junior at Grace City High School and Vice President at Grace City FFA Chapter. Our chapter's members have been slowly dwindling away and so has our class.

Our school requires at least 15 students to sign up for a class. This year only five people signed up, so the class was canceled. We were given the opportunity to go to a neighboring school, Mercer High, for ag class. Three people agreed. The problem is that we can't have and FFA chapter without a class.

I would like to know if there is a way we can still have our chapter? Is there a reason why a vo-ag class is required?

Eva Miller
Grace City, Pennsylvania

The National Constitution and Bylaws of FFA currently states that a student must be enrolled in a vocational agriculture class to be an active FFA member. There is a provision that allows FFA chapters to continue for 36 months from the day the agriculture department was discontinued, provided there is proper supervision and guidance which has to be approved by the local school administrator and the state FFA advisor. See Article IV of the National Constitution, found in the Official Manual, for complete details.—Ed.

My town's school board has terminated our agriculture classes at our school, and along with it, our FFA chapter. Flour Bluff/Padre Island FFA knows our chapter can no longer come together as in the past, but you can. May you all enjoy FFA as we have.

It's funny how you never realize the good that you have until it is gone.

Trish Hackney
Flour Buff, Texas

What Joke?

On the Joke Page of the August-September, 1988 issue, there is a joke about a doctor and his neighbor who both died. I am a 15-year-old girl and my taste of humor does not consist of such jokes. I have read the joke to a few people just to get their opinion of it and they , too, think it is a bad taste of humor.

Mary Havens
Singer, Louisiana

Name Change

I just got back this evening from our Texas State FFA Convention and I'm outraged at the idea of changing the FFA's name! I believe if you have a problem with being a Future Farmer and want to be something else, then be something else.

Crystal May
Smyer, Texas

Washington Conference

I recently returned from the Washington Conference Program that was held in Washington, D.C.

The counselors are true professionals in the way they direct the camp.

I want to thank every FFA'er that attended for the ideas and skills I picked up from them. I encourage all FFA members to make every attempt possible to attend.

Randy E. Bogden
Cascade, Montana

Thank you to all the counselors at the Key Bridge Marriot for making my "Week of Opportunity" a week I will never forget. The places we went and the people I met will always be in my memory. I have gotten so much out of the conference and I would encourage anyone who is interested in the conference to check it out.

Tim Isgitt
Humble, Texas

Ag Career Help

I am very interested in the ag field, but I am not sure what is out there for me to do. If you have any more information or know of some schools I could go to, I would very much appreciate it.

Lesa Frants
Brooklyn Park, Minnesota

FFA has a brochure called "Think About It" that is filled with agricultural career ideas. It can be ordered through the Supply Service Catalog. A good source for college information is Bob Aaron, Director of Communication Services, National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges-Division of Agriculture, One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C. 20036.—Ed.

Send letters or notes with name, address and chapter to MAILBAG, The National FUTURE FARMER, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. All letters are subject to editing.

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1988 Computers in Agriculture Winners

National winner to be announced in Kansas City

By Laurie Cunningham

The newest piece of agricultural equipment is the personal computer," proclaimed Dow Rasdall, of Smiths Grove, Kentucky. Rasdall was one of five national finalists named in the Computers in Agriculture award program at the fifth National FFA Seminar on Computers in Agriculture held August 12-16 in Washington, D.C.

Students from 42 states visited the nation's capital to present a wide variety of agricultural computer programs. Each student had been awarded the expense-paid trip as the state Computers in Agriculture (CIA) winner for making progress in using computers in agriculture and agribusiness.

This year's seminar marked the fifth anniversary of the program. It is sponsored by AgriData Resources, Inc. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

Students, advisors, and family members in attendance participated in workshops using several types of hardware and software. Hands-on instruction in desktop publishing, utilizing the Ag Ed Network and advanced educational technology using laser disks was provided.

National FFA Vice Presidents, Bill Hollis and Mickey McCall hosted a leadership training session. Seminar participants also took time from their extensive computer training to tour Washington.

The highlight of the seminar was the congressional awards luncheon on Capitol Hill. The group was addressed by Dr. D. Kay Wright, U.S. Department of Education and Wilmer Mizell, assistant secretary for governmental and public affairs, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Mizell challenged the group to lead the technological revolution that is occurring in the agricultural industry.

The five national CIA finalists were announced at the luncheon. They are: Tammy Pilcher, Chowchilla, California; Chad Luthro, Moorland, Iowa; Dow Rasdall; Ryan Kissell, Etna, Ohio; and Kirk Snaza, Roslyn, South Dakota.

For the first time, the national winner was not named at the seminar. The winner, along with the ranking of the top five national finalists, will be presented at national FFA convention. Also premiering at the convention will be a special promotional videotape highlighting the seminar.

(Continued on Page 42)

A national winner will be selectedfrom these five finalists at national convention in November. Pictured left to right are Bruce Herz, AgriData Resources, Inc; Dow Rasdall, Kirk Snaza, Tammy Pilcher, Ryan Kissell, Chad Luthro and Dr. D. Kay Wright, U.S. Department of Education. *Photos by Jeri Mattics*

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The Milk Manager

A balance of technical knowledge and practical experience is the right formula for Tim Souza

After finishing his dairy science degree at Cal Poly, Tim Souza plans to manage his family's dairy that currently milks 2,500 Holstein cows. *Photo by Author*

By Andrew Markwart

Start at the bottom and work your way up. That tidbit of advice has been offered by parents and businessmen for a long time. But wouldn't it be easier and more profitable to start at the top? Not according to national Dairy Production Proficiency winner Tim Souza.

Souza believes that managers should have to work their way up in a company if they are going to make proper decisions about their business. That's the way he is approaching his future in his family's dairy operation.

Souza, 20, is a junior majoring in dairy science at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, California. The family dairy operation he is preparing for is located 120 miles away in Tulare where his father, Tony, manages a milking herd of 2,500 Holsteins. It is one of the largest dairies in the Tulare area. Most herds in the community average about 600 head.

Tim goes home at least once each month from school to help with the dairy herd and check up on his personal interests. He owns between 30-35 head himself, depending on his latest buying and selling dealings.

Though Souza sees himself managing the herd in the near future, he clearly remembers what it's like to start at the bottom. He started on the haying crew driving tractor, but that didn't last long. "My dad saw that I liked the cows so he got me off the machinery and put me on the dairy," says Tim.

He then "graduated" to feeding calves and helping his mother sketch the calves' markings for their registration papers. From there, he advanced to the milking crew and by the time he was a senior in high school, was assistant herdsman in charge of the herd's entire breeding program.

With that extensive practical background, Souza is now working on the education he says it will take to be successful in the dairy business. "By knowing the technical aspects, I can apply them to the practical experience and be an effective overall manager," says Tim, "You must have that balance to be a successful manager." To gain that technical knowledge, Souza is taking a class schedule that includes economics, botany, dairy feeds, breeding and genetics.

Industry Views

Between his academic interests at school and financial interests in his dairy herd, Souza is well-versed on the critical topics in the dairy industry today.

BST (bovine somatotropin) is a controversial new genetically-engineered growth hormone that will enable dairy cows to produce up to 25 percent more milk. As a student, Souza sees some exciting possibilities for BST, but as a practicing dairyman, he says it will be a while before it will work down on the farm. "BST needs to be cost efficient before it's used extensively," he says. "Right now it's still impractical because an injection needs to be administered every day." Researchers are in the process of developing time-release systems for administering the hormone.

In the area of producer-funded promotion and advertising campaigns, such as those produced by the California Milk Advisory Board, Tim says he is all for it. "Let's face it, the dairy budget to advertise is in the millions, but when compared to the budgets of a beer or soft drink company, that's nothing. You have to have advertisement and promotion of your product in order to sell it."

His hunch is that the dairy industry is better off promoting cheese and other dairy products than fluid milk. He says that people probably have a limit to the amount of milk that want to drink, but cheese can find its way into the consumers diets in a number of ways. "It takes about ten pounds of milk to make a pound of cheese, and that's an excellent way to utilize the (overabundance of) milk," he adds.

Impressive Record

As a high school junior, Souza was top individual on the winning team of the national FFA dairy judging contest held in Kansas City. As part of the team's winnings, they were invited to judge at the Royal Highland judging show held in Scotland. Tim gives credit for his team's success to his advisor, Max Corbett. Corbett's dairy judging teams have won the state contest four of the last eight years.

Souza was recognized as an outstanding dairyman when he was named Star Greenhand, Chapter Star Farmer and State Star Farmer in the process of his FFA experience. He received his top honor last year at national convention when he was named national Dairy Production proficiency winner, which is sponsored by Alfa-Laval Agri, Inc., American Breeders Service and Manna Pro Corporation as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. •••

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Hard Land, New Ideas

Mark Knudson and his family use practical science to tackle North Dakota's unforgiving farmland.

By Andrew Markwart

At the North Dakota FFA convention this spring, Mark Knudson heard his name called as the winner in the Agriscience Student Recognition Program *and* the Computers in Agriculture program *and* the Diversified Crop Production proficiency award area.

The Agriscience honor carried with it a $1,000 college scholarship, courtesy of the Monsanto Agricultural Company. The Computers in Agriculture award sent him on an all-expense trip to Washington, D.C., in August, thanks to the people at AgriData Resources, Inc. In Washington, he placed in the top ten in the nation at the Computers in Agriculture Seminar.

AGRISCIENCE

So how does one 18-year-old from a place called Divide County High School capture such major awards in one year?

The answer begins two years ago in March, 1986, when Mark and his two brothers, Les, 23, and Michael, 21, bought 507 acres of farmland. The brothers formed a corporation, Knudson Bros. Inc., to purchase a farm near their home in Crosby.

Since the land was rocky and had been poorly managed for a number of years, the Knudson brothers were able to buy it for about $160 per acre. Ice was still ice floating in Long Creek, which separates the Knudson's land from the Canadian province of Saskatchewan, when the young Knudsons embarked on their plan to improve the farm's capacity to produce. The land was also plagued with weed and soil erosion problems.

The first step was to clear the fields of the rocks, stones and boulders that made much of the ground impossible to cultivate. The rocks were left by a retrieving glacier that covered Canada during the Ice Age. "We couldn't bring in any of our machinery to start seeding until we picked the rocks," remembered Mark. "For the first year, we pick rocks almost every day, sometimes six days a week, but it's an investment of *not* breaking your machinery."

While they planted their first crops of durum wheat, barley, and spring wheat, the brothers paid special attention to soil conservation practices that would help preserve the land's thin, precious topsoil. Techniques such as minimum tillage and seeding grass in erosion-prone waterways are paying dividends to the Knudsons today.

The serious weed problem was attacked first through the gathering of information, so Mark could tell what chemical would be most effective on different types of weeds given his growing conditions. Mark attended seminars held by chemical companies and read whatever material he could get his hands on to make a well-informed decision.

Mark also used aerial photographs taken by his father, Jerome, to help manage his soil conservation, weed control and crop rotation practices. Mark says he finds value in the photographs because, "You can see all sorts of things that vary, like land conditions and if your drill isn't seeding right." The photos also help him pinpoint saline seep spots, which are areas of high alkaline concentration levels in the soil.

Since there is generally very little rainfall in Divide County, farmers there use a rotation of cultivating an area one year and leaving it idle, or fallow, the next year. The fallow year keeps some of the moisture in the soil so it can be productive for the next year it is cropped. In the fallow year, chemicals are sprayed on the stubble to control stubborn weeds.

With the photos, Mark has a permanent record of his rotation and knows exactly where crops were planted and what has been sprayed with what chemical. He and his father write and draw all of this information directly on the photos.

Aerial photography is only one of the innovative practices used by Mark and his enterprising father. His father engineered, manufactured and patented his own line of tractors (one is pictured on the cover of this issue).

Mr. Knudson developed a line of tractors for use on hills in the state of Washington that automatically self-level. He sold his interests and patent in the tractors in 1979 and the last Knudson self-leveling tractors were manufactured in 1987 by the Allmand Brothers in Holdrege, Nebraska.

Mark has inherited a scientific, analytical approach to farming from his technically-minded father and has applied that to every aspect of his operation including his record keeping. He uses an IBM compatible personal computer to keep track of all expenses, income and other financial information. He tracks this information for each crop that he grows.

COMPUTERS IN AGRICULTURE

This information is more than just helpful in managing his operation. Since Mark's father is a full-time farmer, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service

This year Mark Knudson was named winner of North Dakota's Agriscience Student Recognition program, Computers in Agriculture program and the Diversified Crop Production proficiency award.

(ASCS) monitors the Knudsons closely to insure they are complying with regulations relating to government wheat and feedgrain price support programs.

Fully aware that some large farm operations have abused the government programs, the Knudsons make sure that they follow every letter of the law regarding machinery rental and other business agreements between father and sons.

Along with using government programs to manage their farming enterprise, the Knudsons also carry crop insurance each year to protect themselves from natural disaster. That investment has paid off for them in two of the past three years. Hail devastated their barley crop in 1986 and again cut yields drastically this past summer, coupled with the severe drought.

But drought is nothing new for the Knudsons. In six of the past seven years, their area has received less than average rainfall. Hungry, plant-eating grasshoppers are also a constant threat to survival of the crops.

Despite these setbacks and challenges, the Knutson Bros., Inc., operation continues to be a success. The reason, according to Mark's FFA advisor and agriculture instructor Butch Haugland, is that, "This is the strongest supportive parental involvement I've seen in 11 years of teaching students."

Mark is a freshman this year at North Dakota State University majoring in agricultural economics. With brothers Michael majoring in banking and finance and Les already working as a mechanical engineer, it's becoming obvious that Mark is the production specialist in the family and will be returning to the farm to manage it.

All three brothers will continue to take an active part in the decision-making, with Mark drawing heavily on Les and Michael's individual talents in mechanics and finance.

With his ability to apply science in a practical manner to his crop production enterprise, Mark Knudson will keep the tractors that carry his name rolling for many years to come. •••

Advisor Butch Haugland, left, and Mark Knudson pause by a marker designating the United States-Canadian border in Divide County, North Dakota.

Photo by Author.

The Winds of Change...

FFA state officers chart the organization's course through its sixth decade.

By Lance E. Walker

The proposed amendments to the National FFA Constitution were on the minds of everyone attending this year's State Presidents' Conference, held July 25-29 in Washington, D.C.

The ongoing topic of discussion was the 19 proposed changes to the FFA constitution which the FFA Board of Directors had approved the previous week.

The revisions, most aimed at broadening the public's perception of FFA, represent the first major changes in the organization's constitution in almost two decades.

The amendments were discussed during a session on delegate issues led by Larry Case, national FFA advisor and Mickey McCall, national FFA eastern region vice president, Thursday morning. They urged the officers to view the ammendments with an open mind and to take a hard look at the problems facing FFA.

Surprisingly, there was little discussion on the recommended changing of the term "vocational agriculture" to "agricultural education" in all instances, including on the FFA emblem. Talk centered mainly on proposals extending membership to seventh- and eighth-graders and upgrading FFA degree requirements.

Reagan Talks Change

The officers were reminded of their important morning session during an address from President Ronald Reagan in the Old Executive Office Building near the White House Thursday afternoon. Reagan talked to the FFA state presidents, advisors, executive secretaries and national officers assembled about the changes taking place in agriculture and FFA.

"In going back to Iowa and talking to many of the farmers there, and businessmen and government leaders, I heard a great deal about changes in American agriculture during the past few years," Reagan said. "In many ways, these changes are reflected in your own organization's emphasis on broadening the public's perception of what FFA is all about. Because you're not only an organization of farmers, but an organization for all those looking for opportunities in agricultural marketing, management, production, engineering, research, communications, government and other areas."

Reagan continued, "Your 400,000 members in 7,800 chapters are testimony to a number of young lives that FFA influences in all these wide areas. And, believe me, having traveled the world as I have during these past eight years, I can tell you how important this work is to the hopes of so many millions for a better world and a better future."

After his remarks, National FFA President Kelli Evans presented Reagan with a plaque paying tribute to his leadership. She invited the president and Mrs.

Congressman Wes Watkins, left, a former Oklahoma FFA state president, said FFA helped him overcome a speech impediment which enabled him to reach his goals. During their tour of the National FFA Center, the state and national FFA officers thanked Cheverolet representatives for contributing a full-size pick-up to the organization. The pick-up will be auctioned off at national convention with proceeds going to the FFA Alumni.

Photo by Bill Stagg

Reagan to the National FFA Convention in November.

The president's address was the highlight of the conference, attended by 94 state officers from 49 state associations. This year's conference was sponsored once again by Chevrolet as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

Important Visits

The week was packed with many activities. On Tuesday the group visited Mt. Vernon and the National FFA Center. While at the center, the officers got a first-hand look at the workings of the national organization and witnessed the presentation of a 1989 Chevrolet pickup truck to the FFA. Dora Nowicki, assistant manager, truck merchandising for Chevrolet, presented the keys to Terri Hames, national FFA western region vice president.

Later that evening the officers were on hand as the truck was donated by the National FFA Organization to the FFA Alumni Association. The pickup will be auctioned off at the National FFA Convention in November to raise funds for the association.

Wednesday afternoon the officers traveled to Capitol Hill for visits with their representatives and senators. Later that evening they gathered at Arlington National Cemetery where they placed a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to honor America's war dead. The day ended with visits to the Jefferson and Lincoln Memorials.

FFA's Role

During the group's congressional luncheon on Thursday, Congressman Wes Watkins (D-Okla.), a former Oklahoma FFA state president, emphasized the importance of FFA's role in developing agricultural leadership and helping young people gain self-confidence.

He talked candidly about how his FFA advisor helped him overcome a speech impediment.

"As a high school freshman, I was the greenest Greenhand my advisor had ever seen," Watkins explained. "I was quiet and didn't talk much because of a speech impediment. So when I told my FFA advisor I wanted to be a state officer someday, he made me stand in class and recite the FFA Creed, and read the newspaper or a magazine until I overcame my speech impediment. I can honestly say that if it were not for FFA, I wouldn't be standing before you today as Congressman Watkins."

Mickey McCall, national FFA eastern region vice president, reminded the FFA officers and legislators in attendance about FFA's changing role.

"Historically, the FFA has long been associated with production agriculture. Today, however, FFA chapters and programs are adapting to new challenges in marketing, agriscience, computer technology and agribusiness management," McCall explained. "With over 400,000 members nationwide, it is apparent that most FFA members are not planning careers in farming. FFA members are seeking out career opportunities in the diverse and ever-changing industry of agriculture. In short, agriculture is a broad field, and FFA plans to cover the territory."

The conference closed on Friday with a visit to the Department of Agriculture and a question-and-answer session with Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng. When asked what FFA members could do to help the agricultural industry, Lyng responded by telling the officers to keep spreading the good news about American agriculture.

"The FFA does a splendid job of doing what it has done well for such a long time—telling agriculture's story," Lyng said. "Your communications skills can be used to help people understand the problems and values of agriculture and rural communities." •••

President Reagan talked to the state FFA presidents in the Old Executive Office Building as Kelli Evans, national FFA president, left, and Kevin Ochsner, national FFA secretary, listened.

Photos by Andrew Markwart

"...you're not only an organization of farmers, but an organization for all those looking for opportunities in agricultural marketing, management, production, engineering, research, communications, government and other areas."

— President Ronald Reagan

In the race to be named Star Farmer and Star Agribusinessman of America, these elite FFA members have moved to...

The Head of the Class

In little more than a month from now, eight nervous young men will stand before a crowd of 22,000 FFA members as an envelope is passed silently to the officers at center stage of the national FFA convention.

For two of these young men, that envelope will hold the key to a dream come true. Inside, a slip of paper will reveal the new 1988 Star Farmer and Star Agribusinessman of America. To the cheers of thousands gathered from around the nation, those two names will ring out. The winners will leap forward, and the FFA will once again honor its best as "Stars Over America."

The Star candidates you're about to meet are chosen from among this year's 713 American Farmer Degree recipients. Achieving the American Farmer Degree is no small feat in itself, since only 2 percent of FFA members ever attain this goal.

The eight candidates profiled here are at the head of this 1988 class. They will compete for the Stars Over America honor at the national convention to be held in November in Kansas City, Missouri.

Clint Oliver: Just Couldn't Wait

Southern Region Star Farmer

Since the age of nine, Clint Oliver couldn't wait for the day when he could become an FFA member and enroll in agriculture classes.

"I began my SOE (Supervised Occupational Experience) program by buying a bred Duroc gilt my first year in FFA," says the 21-year-old Oliver, of Reidsville, Georgia. "Because of my success with my first bred gilt, my interest in swine production soared."

Oliver quickly made it clear his interest was serious. He increased his swine herd of Purebred and market hogs from 43 his first year to 150 head of crossbred sows, 9 herd boars, 300 market hogs and nearly 1,700 feeder pigs last year.

Wesley Eldred

Scott Schelkopf

Oliver's success stems on decision-making and management. He remodeled a breeding barn to decrease stress on boars and gilts, resulting in an eight percent increase in conception rate. He weans pigs at 21 days of age and increased farrowing rate per sow from twice a year to 2.2 times per year. He increased pigs weaned per litter from 7.2 as an FFA greenhand, to 9.1 last year.

After graduating in 1985 from Reidsville High School, Oliver purchased his grandfather's farm and added Nubian goats and feeder calves to his livestock operation. A full-time farmer now, he plans to build a 20-stall farrowing house and new nursery building to handle more sows. Oliver says he may someday look into starting his own retail pork processing business.

"It's not all fun farming today," concludes Oliver. "Farmers have to worry about drought, disease, and a hundred and one other heartaches that other men may never know or feel. But I'm still glad to be a farmer."

Scott Schelkopf: From Football to Farming

Central Region Star Farmer

Scott Schelkopf, 22, turned a broken dream on the football field into a dream come true in the FFA.

Schelkopf, of Strang, Nebraska, was headed for an exciting high school football career when, as a sophomore, a spinal injury forced him to trade his shoulder pads for a show stick. Then one November, as his former teammates prepared for state play-offs, Schelkopf decided to attend the National FFA Convention. The experience proved to be a turning point.

"I had been pretty depressed about football, but when I saw my first convention I realized how many things the FFA had to offer," says Schelkopf. "It motivated me to expand my SOE program and help me establish my career goals."

Schelkopf made a decision: he would throw his energy into FFA and the farming career he hoped to pursue one day. He had launched his SOE program at the Geneva FFA Chapter with a few gilts, three acres of corn, and five acres of milo. He leased a 200-sow farrow-to-finish facility, but swine dysentery forced him to liquidate–an event which may have discouraged someone less determined. He soon repopulated by leasing gilts from a breeding stock company. He now has 280 head, 534 acres of corn and 64 acres of soybeans, and recently expanded into beef cattle.

Modern technology helps Schelkopf

stay on top of the swine business. A computer helps him keep livestock and finance records. He receives up-to-the-minute marketing information through the Dataline Information System. Artificial insemination was incorporated into the hog operation to diversify bloodlines.

Schelkopf, who served as Nebraska FFA vice-president in 1985, is currently a senior at the University of Nebraska majoring in Agriculture. He plans to return to the farm after graduation.

Christopher Bledsoe

Wes Eldred: Against the Odds

Western Region Star Farmer

It's tough enough to get started in the dairy business these days, even when you grow up on a farm. But with the help of his family, Wes Eldred, 22, did it anyway–without the benefit of a farm background.

Eldred, of Bellingham, Washington, knew at a young age he was interested in animals and farming. In junior high school, he and his brother decided they wanted a dairy farm someday. But his family lived on Lummi Island off the Pacific coast, where it was impossible to ship milk. Meanwhile Eldred became more experienced in livestock management, raising a few more beef cattle and Holstein bull calves each year. He even tried his hand at raising a bred gilt.

Steve Wilhelm

When the price of beef declined, he saw his ticket out. "I decided to sell most of the Herefords and invest in dairy animals," he says. He was only a junior in high school, but he found a run-down 80-acre dairy farm which hadn't produced milk for a decade. With the help of his construction-contractor father and some innovative ideas of his own, Wes has been able to upgrade the existing farm buildings to a grade-A dairy at a relatively low cost.

Along with farm improvements Eldred built a 120-cow free stall and hay storage barn, a manure lagoon and a bunker silo. To increase cow comfort and decrease bedding costs Eldred put used tires under the bedding in free stalls for his dairy cows. He cut feed expense with a 4-stall computer feed system. This new system enables each cow to be fed on an individual basis. The computer is reprogrammed to feed each cow from the monthly milk production reports.

Eldred's SOE program, which had started with a handful of cattle and hogs, has swelled to 188 dairy cows and replacement heifers, along with one hog.

His future plans include a new machine shop and calf barn.

"I enjoy this occupation very much and believe it has a good future," he says. "In a few years I hope to increase my herd to 300 animals."

Clint Oliver

J. Richard Speer: Not Bigger, Just Better

Eastern Region Star Farmer

In the dairy business, bigger doesn't always mean better. And no one understands that better than Richard Speer, Blairs Mills, Pennsylvania. "I'm a little bit like they are at Chrysler: my goal is not necessarily to be the biggest, but to be the best," says the 21-year-old farmer. "I don't believe you have to have 5,000 cows to be successful. You just have to be efficient at what you do."

Speer, who grew up on a family dairy farm, received his first dairy calf when he was nine years old. Throughout his high school agriculture years at Southern Huntingdon High School, he gradually built up his herd by investing previous profits in new animals and equity. In 1985, with the help of a loan and the money he had earned from his SOE program, he entered into a 50-50 partnership with his father.

Today the partnership includes two farms of 560 acres that produce corn, alfalfa, mixed hay, oats, barley, and wheat. The Speers presently have 104 head of Holsteins including replacement stock. DHIA (Dairy Herd Improvement Association) records help Speer track individual cow production performance, and spot trouble before it happens.

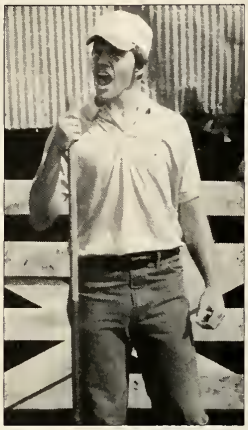
"One of the most important things I've learned over the years is management and good records," Speer says. "The dairy must be treated like any other business–because it is a business."

(Continued on Page 26)

(Continued from Page 25)

Speer designed new calf pens which make it easier to clean calf areas. To better utilize performance records, he installed a grain feeding system that feeds each cow individually. He feeds cows automatically six times a day. "By splitting your feedings up, the cow doesn't eat all at once," he explains. "The cow has more time to break down the feed and use it to their advantage. That way they're more efficient with feed, and it's already brought our herd milk average up over 1,000 pounds."

Speer's future plans include paying off his loan and eventually buying out the other half of the partnership with his father. His goal is to increase herd production to top 20,000 pounds annual milk production per cow.



Phillip Prater

Phil Prater: Call of the Auctioneer

Southern Region Star Agribusinessman

Whether it's farm machinery, real estate, cattle, or personal property, Phillip Prater's goal to become a fully licensed auctioneer has him constantly putting his money where his mouth is.

The 21-year-old Prater, of McMinnville, Tenn., became interested in auctioneering in 1983 when he signed on with the Paul Holder Realty & Auction Co., also of McMinnville. He started by doing odd jobs around the office, but quickly became more involved, creating advertisements, posting directions to sales, arranging farm machinery before sale day, and handling blood tests for livestock.

After graduation from Warren County Senior High School, Prater took auctioneering and real estate classes. He is now a licensed apprentice auctioneer and affiliate broker. Now he uses his auctioneering skills to spot bids or "cry" sales. That's the expression for an auctioneer's chant.

"Public relations is an important part of my business," he says. "I'm in constant contact with people. I feel I am learning a lot about dealing with the public."

Prater wants to own his own auctioneering firm and farming operation someday. He has a good start on both goals. When he's not preparing an auction, he helps Holder manage his 1,900-acre cattle farm. Prater and two partners recently purchased a 117-acre farm as an investment.

Steve Wilhelm: Building a Strong Foundation

Eastern Region Star Agribusinessman

Steve Wilhelm, Custar, Ohio, took two of his favorite things — a knack for carpentry and a love for people — and built a future in the lumber business.

Wilhelm grew up on a farm and took high school agriculture classes because of his love for farming. "But once in vocational agriculture, my eyes were really opened to the excellent and rewarding career opportunities available in addition to farming," says Wilhelm, 21. "I soon learned that the opportunity for me to farm was not there with our limited farm base."

Instead, Wilhelm studied agribusiness courses, and landed a job with Carter Lumber Co., in Bowling Green. He starting as a yardsman, unloading lumber and keeping the yard clean. He was swiftly promoted a year later to yard foreman, where he was responsible for a crew of men.

After graduating from Bowling Green high school he began working full-time at the lumber company. He was again promoted to sales, working behind the counter, answering the telephone and waiting on customers. He advises customers on materials and their use, and often uses his own carpentry skills to complete jobs.

"I feel customer service is one of my strongest attributes," he says. "My customers depend on me, and my recommendations can involve thousands of dollars."

Wilhelm also likes the fact that he still has ties to agriculture. "Most of our customers are farmers, and they can be a real challenge at times," he says. "I am proud that I have been able to attract many farmers to our business. They know me and have confidence in my advice."

Wilhelm hopes to manage a lumberyard within five years. Meanwhile he plans to enroll in a technical school and study business management and computers to get a better idea what to expect when he's his own boss.

John Gosney, III
Advisor, Greg Hartman

John Gosney: Harvesting Dreams

Western Region Star Agribusinessman

John Gosney, III, of Fairview, Oklahoma, will never forget the time he pulled up in his combine to harvest wheat for a new farm customer. The 80-year-old landlady took one look at the teenager and inquired, "Sonny, where's your boss?"

Gosney, then 16, replied, "I'm it."

Such is the life of Gosney, who spends his summers traveling the high plains in search of wheat harvesting jobs. As a youngster Gosney spent hours in the tractor and combine cab with his father, an experienced custom cutter. He joined FFA and attended vocational agriculture classes at Fairview High School.

He purchased a round baler at a local farm auction and learned–from his mistakes since he had no experience–the best ways to harvest his father's and

J. Richard Speer

grandfather's hay.

When John was 16 his father wanted to sell one of his two Gleaner combines. "That's when I saw my opportunity," Gosney says. He took out a loan, bought the combine, and set out on his own. He combed the area for wheat harvesting jobs, and soon made a name for himself. In the few years he's been cutting wheat he's learned to become a skilled mechanic, agronomist, crew manager, supervisor, and public relations specialist. Although he was young, he worked hard to impress new customers.

Gosney plans to return to his agronomy studies at Oklahoma State University next year. At this point he is interested in a career in plant genetics, but holds hope that he can continue his custom cutting and farm operations, too. "It's going to take a lot to get me away from the farm," Gosney concludes.

Chris Bledsoe: The Long Haul

Central Region Star Agribusinessman

Chris Bledsoe, Eldon, Missouri, recognized at an early age that goal setting and a lot of hard work are the key to a successful future.

As a youngster, Bledsoe worked for his father, who owned half of the Olean Livestock Market, a sale barn in Eldon, Missouri. He soon started getting paid for his work, and after he got his drivers license, began to haul cattle for farmers before and after sales.

With agriculture classes at Eldon High School, life was busy. But it soon became even busier. As the volume of business increased, so did demand for cattle hauling services. Bledsoe and his brother became partners, and by the time he was a junior in high school, he had taken out a loan and purchased his own truck. As profits came in, money was reinvested in more trucks and equipment.

Today, Bledsoe and his brother often hire drivers to help with their business. Last year they became a full-fledged company, known as "Bledsoe Trucking, Inc." Chris owns a 1981 International and has half interest in two Peterbilt trucks and several livestock trailers.

Bledsoe has diversified his interests to include part ownership in a fescue seed and hay company. He also raises cattle. Bledsoe's wife Gayle helps keep records up-to-date.

Even though his success has been satisfying, Bledsoe is not content to sit back and relax. "I would like to buy a farm and maybe add some new trucks and trailers to the business," he says. •••

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The New Ag Professionals:

Public Relations Offers Variety

By Molly Wilson

You may not realize it, but when you send information about your FFA chapter's activities to your local newspaper, you're acting as a public relations specialist.

The term "public relations" was first used many years ago by the Association of American Railroads, in an effort to win favor with the public. Today, public relations specialists evaluate public attitudes, form strategies for helping organizations or companies communicate with the public, then administer communications campaigns to win understanding and acceptance among specific population groups.

Today, 85 percent of the 1,500 largest corporations, including many agribusinesses, have public relations or communications departments. Public relations companies—usually called "agencies"—specialize in handling public relations activities for "client" firms. Several advertising agencies also have public relations departments. There are 150,000 public relations professionals nationwide.

Although clients, messages, and audiences differ drastically, good communications skills are required for all public relations personnel.

"You may not realize it, but when you send information about your FFA chapter's activities to your local newspaper, you're acting as a public relations specialist."

Unlike a newspaper reporter, whose main calling is to write articles on specific subjects, the tools of the public relations are many: advertising, professional lobbying, press-agentry, marketing, and publicity, for example.

It was that variety that lured Jeff Altheide, (pronounced All-Tide) Arlington Heights, Illinois, into a public relations career. Altheide, a former FFA chapter president at Macomb, Illinois, wanted to go to college and study agriculture, but wasn't sure which field he wanted to specialize in. He learned about public relations when he spent a year as an FFA state sectional reporter.

"I wrote news releases and arranged FFA publicity. I remember doing interviews on tape and sending them to radio stations, and thinking that was really interesting," he says. "It was through FFA that I became interested in communications."

He studied agriculture communications at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. Only a handful of major universities have an agricultural college that offers specialized training in agricultural communications. Most people who work in agricultural public relations are agriculture communications, journalism or English graduates.

Altheide launched his career at Gibbs and Soell, a 15-year-old New York-based public relations firm with five offices nationwide employing approximately 65 people. Altheide was able to put his FFA reporting experience and college training into practice almost immediately at Gibbs and Soell.

As client service manager, Altheide works on the Dow Chemical Agricultural Products account. Dow is one of Gibbs and Soells' largest clients. According to Altheide, the more you work with a company, the more you know and understand it and their products—thus, the better job you'll be able to do for the client.

Altheide's duties vary. He supervises production of articles, press releases, newsletters, slide shows and video tapes, radio and TV publicity, and organizes press conferences.

"When you start off in an agency public relations job you're writing day in and day out," he says. Strong writing skills are a necessity in all public relations jobs. "But the more supervisory responsibility and client contact you have, the less writing you tend to do," he adds.

Gibbs and Soell once handled mostly agricultural public relations accounts, but lately the firm has diversified. One reason for Gibbs and Soells' diversification is the shrinking farm economy.

Jeff Altheide helps companies such as Dow communicate effectively with the public. *Photo by Brad Bremer*

"The changes that are taking place in public relations are mostly due to the changes that are happening in the agriculture industry," says Altheide.

Altheide believes that starting salaries in ag public relations are about the same as those who graduate into news writing or editorial positions. He estimates the salary range for new graduates between $14,000-17,000 annually.

In most agencies, responsibilities grow as a person gains more experience. Most people straight out of college begin as junior account executives, and work towards becoming account executives, and account supervisors or managers. After years of experience and growth, you may be promoted to division, account, or group vice president—depending on the agency.

Altheide belongs to professional associations like the American Agriculture Editors Association, and the Agriculture Relations Council. He maintains these membership so he can associate with other professionals nationwide who share similar concerns and interests. •••

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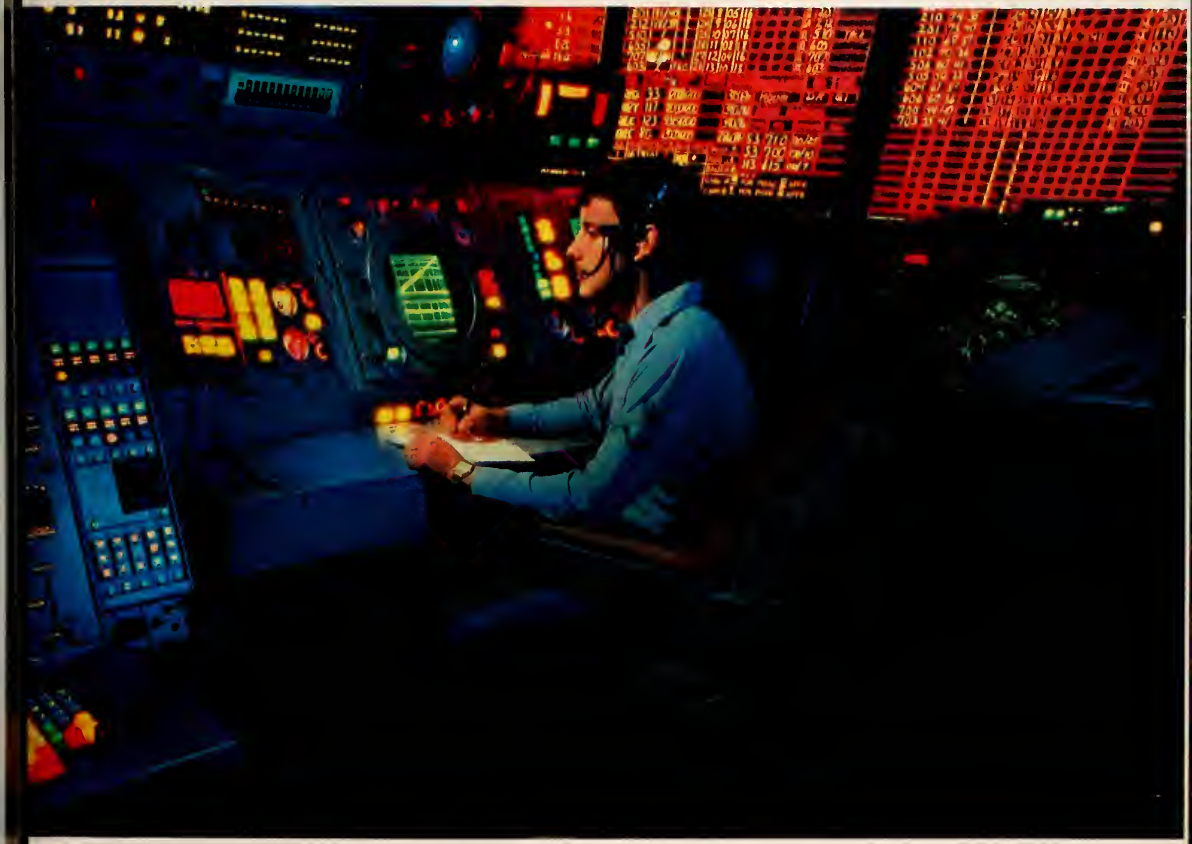

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TULSA FFA TAKES OFF!

Urban McLain High School students drawn to leadership, job skills

By Kelly Stewart

Edward Culton grinds the weld on a swing set he built during the first year at McLain's agriculture program. Culton will enter the project in the Tulsa State Fair this fall. Photos by Ron Wilkerson

There are no cows...or combines...or wide open spaces. There are skyscrapers...and asphalt...and half a million people.

But that didn't keep the McLain High School vocational agriculture program from almost doubling enrollment during its first year.

High school agriculture began at the urban school in Tulsa, Oklahoma during the fall of 1987 with 70 students. Nearly 120 students out of the 900-student school, enrolled in high school agriculture for the second year.

"None of the students knew what kind of class they were getting into when they enrolled," said Earnie Martens, high school agriculture instructor. "These students all live in the city and don't have an agriculture background. They are learning the basics first—basics most of us take for granted, such as where meat and milk come from."

Martens attributed the increase in students to a "positive, unusual" vo-ag program. "A lot of the students saw the program and said, 'Wow! What is this?' They were excited about the opportunities available through vo-ag and FFA." Martens said.

"The increase in enrollment had a lot to do with student recruiting," said Detra Long, FFA chapter vice president. "We had so much fun in class—and we learned so much—that we had to tell other students."

"At first other students teased me about taking a "farming" class," Long said. "But it doesn't bother me now because this class is more than just farming."

Set Up Shop

During the first year of the program, Martens taught basic horticulture, agricultural mechanics, agribusiness and animal science. A 630-square-foot teaching greenhouse was completed for the high school agriculture program in March of 1988. A horticulture laboratory is being built next to the greenhouse for further instruction in horticulture science. During the first year, Martens, with student help, converted an old auto mechanics shop into the agriculture shop.

"I like the agricultural mechanics part the best," said senior Bruce Williams. "Mr. Martens is a good teacher, I've learned a lot that will help me find a job." Williams said high school agriculture and FFA training will give him an advantage over other students when entering the labor market.

"Our main thrust is to teach urban students skills in agriculture that will help them find jobs," Martens said. "There are all kinds of jobs we can prepare them for—especially in the horticulture or ag mechanics areas."

Most of the students will not be involved in production agriculture in the future, Martens said. But high school agriculture will teach them skills that may help them obtain other jobs or make it through college, he added. "All skills learned in vocational agriculture will make the student more marketable in the job market."

Looking Good

Another advantage of the high school agriculture program is its ability to help combat a negative image many people see the school as having, according to Jimmy Soales, McLain High School principal.

The school administration is serious about changing the image of the school, primarily by emphasizing positive events and programs, Soales said. "The vo-ag/FFA program provides something substantial and with high visibility that benefits students."

"Vocational agriculture is a type of

(Continued on Page 34)

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(Continued from Page 32)

program that will motivate students to do better in all areas of school," said Soales. "We were looking for a non-traditional ag program to provide an innovative approach for students in an urban setting."

The high school agriculture/FFA program at McLain High School is unique in other ways. The chapter, which is composed of all black students, represents a large portion of black FFA members in Oklahoma. Less than 3 percent of Oklahoma's 18,295 FFA members—approximately 500 students—are black.

McLain FFA members were impressed with other students when they attended their first FFA activity with different chapters. "We were the only black students there," said one of the students. "But color didn't make any difference."

Because of the program's growth, a second high school agriculture teacher, Rick McDaniels, was added to teach this year. "These students live in an area without many positive activities," said McDaniels. "One of my goals is to give the students an edge as they approach the job market."

"These students live in an area without many positive activities," said McDaniels. "One of my goals is to give the students an edge as they approach the job market."

McDaniels will concentrate his teaching on ag mechanics, while Martens will concentrate on horticulture. Both teachers will emphasize leadership development through FFA.

"The FFA and vocational agriculture will provide these students with opportunities they would otherwise never have," Martens said. "And those activities will help make any student a better person—that's what it's all about."

Long describes herself as a "much better leader" after a year's experience with the FFA. "It's taught me to settle down and do things for others," she said. "We've learned to put our best foot forward."

During the first year of the program, two representatives from each class were chosen to serve on a chapter FFA executive committee. The committee acted as chapter officers until officers were elected in the spring of 1988. This allowed students to become familiar with the program before they elected leaders, Martens said.

"Show Me"

Martens and McDaniels have high expectations for the high school agriculture program at McLain High School. But they said there were—and still are—many challenges to be met.

"This is really a non-traditional agriculture program," Martens said. "I have had to deal with different attitudes and develop different ways to motivate students in the program. I've had to change some of my ideas about what and how I teach."

"Many city kids are bored—especially those not involved in athletics," Martens said. "Anything we can do to exert a positive influence is worth the time and money."

"The students' culture is different than my own," McDaniels said. "A big challenge has been adapting to the students. I'm really looking forward to working more with leadership development and

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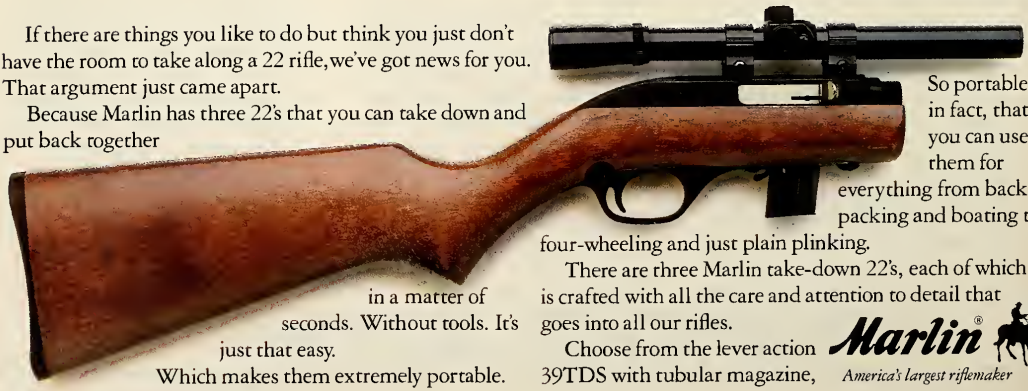

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job placement."

Besides the greenhouse and horticulture laboratory, students use a one-acre plot of land next to the high school agriculture facilities as a learning land lab. There are also possibilities of teaching a summer school agriculture program—the first summer agriculture program in Oklahoma—next year, Martens said.

"You have to remember we weren't starting a program in a community that has any sort of agriculture, or even 4-H programs. We started at ground level," Martens said. "Many of the students were very skeptical and had strong show-me attitudes. But something happened to really turn them on to the program."

"I was put in the class and at first I didn't like it," said Williams, who was president of the chapter's parliamentary procedure team. "But I learned a lot and enrolled in the ag mechanics class this year."

Several of the students are considering attending college because of the high school agriculture and FFA training, Martens said.

McDaniels hopes for success in Oklahoma's FFA Greenhand Quiz Contest this year. "We intend to win—just to show them we can do it and that Tulsa McLain is here."

As first year instructor of the new agriculture program at Tulsa McLain High School, instructor Ernie Martens had plenty of challenges and opportunities.

"My philosophy is is that it's not necessarily how smart you are, it's what kind of heart you have," McDaniels said. "Our job as teachers is to get the students to believe in themselves."

"Many students are seeing a facet of life they had never seen before," Martens said. "They were amazed at the public speaking skills of students their own age—especially the state and national officers."

"The speakers were great at the National Convention," Long said. "The convention really motivated us. By listening to students speak, it showed me that if they can do it, then I can do it." •••

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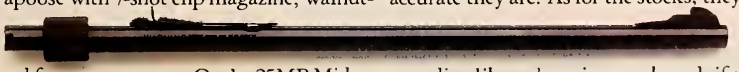

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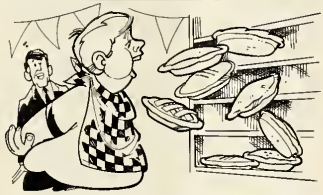
Chapter Scoop

Oak Harbor, Ohio, provided the roast pig and sweet corn for the last fair board meeting of the year.

Members of the **Kuna**, Idaho, FFA who showed beef or dairy animals at the county received herdsmanship awards for keeping their areas clean.

Young and old alike enjoyed the petting zoo set up by **Paris**, Kentucky, FFA at their county fair.

Melba, Idaho, hosted a free appreciation breakfast for friends and supporters of FFA.



The pie eating contest at **Genoa**, Ohio, was no challenge for the winner, Bruce Clark.

Old jackets never die, and they only fade away a little. When local newspaper editor *Mr. Jackson*, spoke at the **Lower Dauphin,** Pennsylvania, FFA banquet he brought along his 1951 jacket from his days as chapter president in Texas.

Over 950 elementary children were invited to the **Union County** FFA Chapter's livestock facilities in Blairsville, Georgia, for an animal petting zoo.

Mansfield, Texas, FFA encourages members to order official jackets, ties and scarfs by paying the shipping and handling charges.

Gervais, Oregon's, annual July FFA picnic meeting helps new members get acquainted. Chapter pays for meat and drinks; members bring salads and desserts.

Northeastern FFA in North Carolina built, painted and manned a safety booth for the community festival. They gathered farm safety brochures and information from the extension service; home safety information from the local fire department; hunter safety materials from the wildlife resources; and boater safety information from the Coast Guard.

DeWitt Central FFA in Iowa had a swimming party for all the members who "walked" the bean plot.

Greenhand members of **Antelope,** Arizona, worked on the courtesy corps at state convention and learned about the importance of proper dress.

When *Susan Fisher* was elected state officer, her home chapter at **Mount Union Captain Jack** in Pennsylvania, sent her flowers.

Edgar, Wisconsin, members helped clean up ginseng gardens after a tornado went through the community.

San Angelo, Texas, Central High FFA Chapter increased membership from 42 to 96 members plus they have a 75 member parent club.

Wouldn't mind at all being around **Mohawk**, Ohio, during FFA Week for the free ie cream cones they gave out at school.

Special events for **Chelan,** Washington, were cowboy day, look-alike contest and a slogan contest during FFA Week.

Beecher, Illinois, FFA used the Week as a fund raiser week, too. They sold donuts to students and staff during lunch two days and pork burgers two other days.

Anthony Wayne, Ohio, Chapter had a display at the mall.

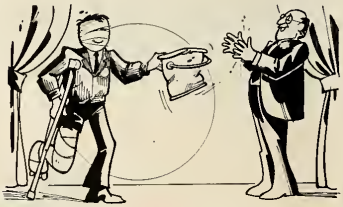
The excitement at the **McKay,** Oregon, FFA campout was the original tape made of *Advisor Stebbins* snoring. The members presented him with the loudest snoring award.

Preble Shawnee, Ohio, FFA has started a junior FFA and it meets monthly. They had a special corn growing contest (five seeds were given at one meeting and the results judged at the next meeting) and gave an FFA t-shirt to the winner.

When 12 semi trailer loads of hay arrived from Vermont farmers for farmers in Ohio, over 25 FFA members helped upload the hay onto local farmers' trucks. The members were from **Riverdale, Kenton, Hardin Northern** and **Upper Scioto Valley** Chapters.

There were some new things to see on this year's project tour for **Evergreen,** Ohio, FFA. Besides the traditional corn, soybeans, cattle and hogs, there were irrigated strawberries, pheasants and sheep dogs.

After the evening session at the Virginia state convention, State Farmer recipients and their families from **Culpepper** Senior Chapter joined the rest of the gang from the home chapter for a pizza celebration.



The battered bucket award is a traveling award presented yearly to the **Alex**, Oklahoma, member who has been unfortunate enough to have had the silliest, funniest or most "klutzy" accident of the year.

Margaret Whately, reporter, sends word about the officers from **Merced**, California, attending an officer leadership conference with sessions on proper etiquette and cooperation.

Alan Basler, reporter for **Akron**, Colorado, tells about his chapter exhibiting native grasses from all over the county at the fair.

With paint brushes in hand, **South Shelby,** Missouri, FFA have helped prepare the hog barns for this year's show.

There's no time like the present, for you to take pen in hand and send in more "hot scoop" about things your chapter is doing. Especially it would be neat to hear about some things that you all have thought up that other chapters may not have tried.

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Those Terrific Tourists

Marion County FFA Revitalizing Economy Through Tourism Project

By Larry LaCorte

In the year 2000 West Virginia's top industry will be travel and tourism, predicts the Governor's office of Economic Development. "No since in waiting around to see if it happens," says Larry Watson, Marion County FFA chapter advisor. "Something different has got to be done in West Virginia to effect the overall economic climate of the state. We're certainly not going to effect it in any big way, but we try to take on a little bit each year and contribute some."

It's with this attitude that members of the Marion County FFA Chapter have developed their Building Our American Communities (BOAC) project over the last five years.

Beginning a few years ago by helping the local historical society create a museum, the chapter has been involved ever since in establishing a long-range program of achieving economic revitalization through developing community tourist resources.

"We felt there is a lot to do and see in the county," explains Shaun Kuhn, BOAC chairman, "People driving up and down the interstate aren't aware of this and that's when we came up with the idea of building a tourist service center."

The pilot project, which is targeted to be completed before the end of the 1989 school year, will be the first of its kind in West Virginia. Kuhn says signs will be erected along the interstate alerting travelers of the center and the 14x20-foot facility will be staffed at all times.

In initiating the project, Kuhn conducted a forum inviting local businessmen and government officials to participate. With overwhelming support from that meeting, FFA members went to the Marion County Commission and obtained a $5,000 grant.

They decided to build the facility near the school and transport later it to a leased site right off of the downtown Fairmont exit of I-79. According to Watson, the center will be a temporary structure. He says the chapter hopes to prove that a need exists for center and a permanent one will be built in the future.

The facility will have information, be able to make reservations in area hotels, as well as give directions to travelers. But most importantly, "it will project an image of West Virginia and it will aggressively try to get travelers to stay in our county for a while," said Watson.

Future, present and past BOAC chairpersons Jenny Pratt, Shaw Kuhn and Leon Ammons, from left.

Photo by Author

Chapter president Leon Ammons says he sees the concept of organized tours as one of the biggest attractions of the chapter's BOAC project. Working with area farmers, FFA members have organized what they call "back road adventure tours" where tourists can visit with local farmers, tour their farms and talk about the area's culture.

Besides the tourist service center, FFA members cooperated with the West Augusta Historical Society in restoring a log cabin. Floors were installed in two stories, steps were constructed and a chimney was added to the cabin which FFA members moved to the historical society's museum site in 1987. Members gave up several Saturdays to work on the project.

Another major part of the chapter's BOAC project was assisting with the development of an outdoor amphitheater for Pricketts Fort State Park. The new $75,000 outdoor complex will serve thousands of tourists each year. FFA members moved tons of gravel by hand to fill-in the circular seating arrangement.

For their outstanding program, the Marion County FFA Chapter was named Eastern Region BOAC winner in 1987 and 1988. The BOAC program is sponsored by RJR Nabisco, Inc., as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

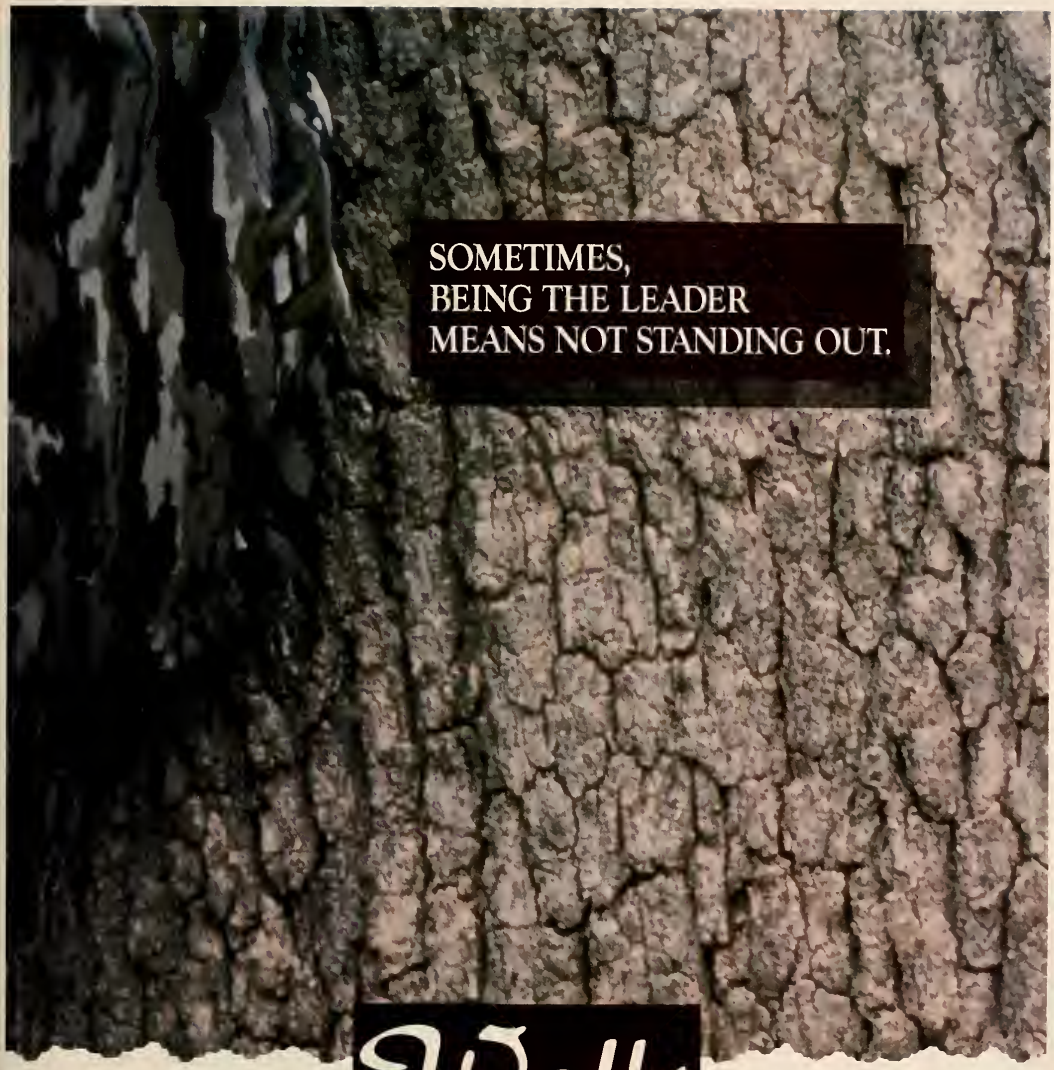
With the tourist service center almost completed, members of the 1988-89 chapter's BOAC committee have a lot of decisions to make. "One of the biggest challenges we face is being able to get the center operating on a day-to-day basis and financing it," says Jenny Pratt, chairman for the '88-89 project.

The chapter has set up a "tourist service center account" and has enlisted the chamber of commerce to assist in obtaining support for the center. Pratt also hopes to involve senior citizen groups in the county to help staff the center.

Pratt says a weekly radio show entitled "Tourist Talk" is in the plans for the near future. With this radio program, she hopes the chapter can keep tourists informed of activities in the area.

Beyond all this, she says, the center could very easily become a state-wide tourist service center or even serve as a model for other counties in the state.

Whatever direction the chapter takes, the Marion FFA Chapter will be having a direct impact on the state's tourist industry—touting the state's natural beauty and "Projecting the Mountaineer Spirit," the chapter's 1987-88 BOAC theme. •••



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CONVENTION COVERAGE 1988

Not since 1969 when delegates voted on changing the FFA Constitution to admit girls has their been such interest in the business sessions of the National FFA Convention.

You can count on a "full house" for the business sessions at the 61st National FFA Convention, November 10-11-12, 1988!

Delegates will tackle the most far reaching list of Constitutional changes ever. In fact, convention organizers have allotted an extra three hours on Wednesday, November 9, for the work to be done thoroughly.

These proposed Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws (see adjacent article on this page) have been discussed in every state and in chapters for the last year or so. They were prepared by a study task force of members and state adult leaders, then presented to the National FFA Board.

The Board reviewed them and has recommended a final list for consideration by the delegates to pass. (A complete set of the final recommended proposals was also in the September issue of BETWEEN ISSUES Newsletter mailed to all vo-ag departments.)

OTHER BUSINESS

One other sure-to-be-debated item of convention business will come up, however, since there is a recommendation for an increase in national dues to $3.50 - an increase of 50 cents to keep the program fiscally strong.

Choosing a 1988-89 national officer team will be a tension building process until the new officers are named on Saturday, November 12.

SPEAKERS

Speakers already confirmed include country entertainer Jerry Clower sponsored through the FFA Foundation by Mississippi Chemical Company; motivational speaker, Dennis Waitly; agricultural futurist and educator, Dr. Lowell Catlett sponsored by Farmland Industries, Inc.; and former Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz who will also speak at the American Farmer Luncheon. Assistant Secretary of Education, Ms. Bonnie Guiton, will speak Thursday afternoon.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Thursday evening session is always a high point of the convention with the pageant to name the Star Farmer and Star Agribusinessman. It follows recognition of the many supporters to the FFA Foundation.

National public speaking contest finals are also popular events for convention goers. The extemporaneous finals will be at 2 p.m. on Thursday. The prepared finals will be in the Friday evening session along with the recognition of national proficiency winners.

The first national winner of the Agriscience Student Recognition Program will be announced this year in Kansas City. That winner will take home a $5,000 scholarship.

Outside the main hall, major convention attractions include the finals for the nine national judging contests and the National Agricultural Career Show in adjacent Bartle Hall with a classroom-of-the-future with hands-on computer areas.

AMERICAN ROYAL RODEO

One convention week highlight is the American Royal's rodeo. FFA members receive a $2 discount off of American Royal rodeo performances at 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 9, featuring the McCarters; Thursday, November 10, featuring Nitty Gritty Dirt Band; Friday, November 11 , featuring the O'Kanes; and Saturday, November 12, featuring Eddie Rabbit. Ticket sales will be in the lobby of Bartle Hall.

MEAL FUNCTIONS

The following meal functions will be available for members, advisors and guests downtown for the convention:

National FFA Alumni Banquet—Wednesday, November 9, 4:45 P.M., Bartle Hall, Room 213. This banquet is for all those attending the Alumni National Convention that day, plus for all others who wish to purchase tickets. Following the banquet the Alumni will hold their fund-raising auction. Price is $10.

How-To-Win-An-FFA-Scholarship Lunch—Thursday, November 10, 12:00 Noon, Bartle Hall, Room 213. This is a how-to session with bag lunches for all FFA members and their advisors who want to know more about applying for FFA Foundation-scholarships. Price is $4.

American Farmer Luncheon—Friday, November 11, 12 Noon, (Serving lines open at 11:30 A.M.) Bartle Grand Hall. Enjoy a delicious buffet along with other American Farmer degree recipients, their advisors, families and friends and any others interested. Dr. Earl Butz, former USDA secretary, will be the speaker. Price is $10.

National Leadership Dinner—Friday, November 11, 5 P.M., Bartle Grand Hall. Join chapter and state FFA officers and past Washington Conference Program (WCP) participants, for a wonderful feast and a motivational speaker during this special leadership program. Michael Broom will be speaker. Price is $10.

Ticket purchases may be made by mail. They are not refundable but are transferrable. Make checks payable to: National FFA Organization. Checks must accompany the ticket order. Tickets must be picked up at the Special Meal Ticket Booth in Kansas City's H. Roe Bartle Hall lobby. List each meal and the number of tickets desired and return with check to: National FFA Convention Meals, Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309. Orders due October 15. •••

1988 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO FFA CONSTITUTION/BYLAWS

Several major amendments to the National FFA Constitution and Bylaws will be considered by the delegates for final decisions during the 1988 National FFA Convention in Kansas City in November.

The proposals were submitted to the FFA Board of Directors at their July, 1988, meeting by a special study committee which met and collected input from the field for over a year. If passed, any changes will be phased into operation as appropriate.

When the Future Farmers of America was established in November 1928, it was a national organization for high school boys enrolled in vocational agriculture. Since that time many changes have taken place in (1) the industry of agriculture, (2) the high school vocational agriculture program, and (3) the Future Farmers of America.

Naturally, in an organization the size of the FFA, some members will plan to pursue a career in traditional production agriculture; literally, they are "future farmers." However, a larger percentage of members will become involved in other careers in agriculture.

In an effort to more accurately depict the membership and project a broader, more positive image of the FFA, one amendment proposed to delegates will be to amend Article I of the National FFA Constitution to read: "The name of the Organization shall be the National FFA Organization. Recognized units of the Organization may officially use the letters "FFA" and/or the words "Future Farmers of America" to designate the organization, its units and/or members."

Another important amendment would change references of "vocational agriculture" throughout the document to "agriculture education."

In recent years, the term "vocational" has not always been received positively. As a result, a number of state education agencies have started to move away from the term "vocational agriculture" to broader, more up-to-date terminology.

A similar amendment includes changing the words in the FFA emblem to agricultural education instead of vocational agriculture.

Other proposed amendments include (1) changing SOEP to SAEP (supervised agricultural experience program); (2) expanding potential membership to seventh and eight graders; (3) changing the requirements of Chapter, State and American Degrees; (4) replacing the word "Farmer" in active and honorary degrees and inserting the letters "FFA" in all degree names including the Greenhand FFA Degree; (5) increasing the quota of extra American FFA Degree nominations a state may submit; (6) opening up the option for chapters and states to elect more than the six usual officers; (7) increasing the number of delegates per state at national convention; and (8) cleaning up grammar, correcting out-of-date addresses or titles, and spelling out current procedures for Board of Director operation.

National Convention Featured on Satellite Network

The National FFA Convention will again be broadcast via satellite. RFD/TV, a new agricultural satellite television network based in Omaha, Nebraska, will be uplinking 16 hours of the convention over five broadcasts November 10-12. The broadcasts are unscrambled and will be carried over Spacenet I(SI) Channel 23. It will be available in all states except Alaska and Hawaii. The full program schedule is:

Thursday, November 10	2:00-5:00 pm 7:00-10:30 pm
Friday, November 11	2:00-5:00 pm 7:00-10:30 pm
Saturday, November 12	2:00 pm-5:00 pm

This is a chance for thousands of FFA members to watch the convention back home. Typically a member, advisor, Alumni member or local supporter with a satellite dish would host groups for viewing the convention.

Other ideas are to have parents, school officials, other high school students and friends of FFA members, Alumni Affiliates, and Young Farmer Chapters come to witness the excitement and drama of the convention via satellite.

Every chapter in the nation should take this opportunity to capture the National Convention on a video cassette recorder for future use in the classroom, at chapter meetings, at camp or for leadership training.

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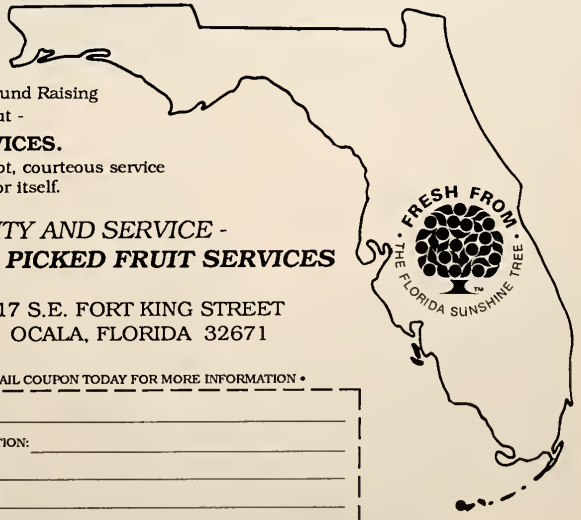

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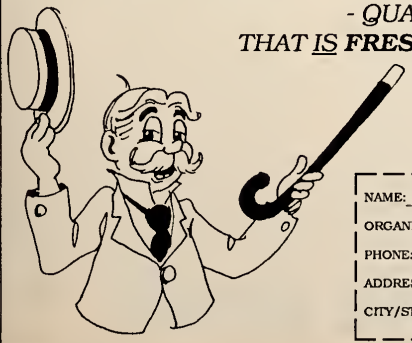

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(Continued from Page 17)

Here is a glimpse of the top five Computers in Agriculture programs.

Ryan Kissell
Etna, Ohio

Placing a bulletin board system on-line for his community's use is just one way Ryan Kissell has integrated computers in agriculture.

Ryan, 16, also created a small accounting package for use with his swine operation. The computerized accounting system has enabled him to better understand which commodity is a help or hindrance to his operation and why. Kissell has distributed his software package to interested buyers to preview.

Kissell's future includes farming part-time after graduation. He would like to become a commercial pilot using his computer experience to create computerized maps, charts, and flight paths.

Chad Luthro
Moorland, Iowa

Chad Luthro uses the TRS-80 Model III to keep records of all farm and family expenses, income and personal records.

These records have made it easier for their farm operation to calculate taxes and in securing loans. Luthro also uses a modem to access the most recent marketing information. This enables him to stay on top of a rapidly shifting commodities market by monitoring world supply and demand as well as usage reports.

Using an AppleWorks spreadsheet, Luthro records fruit sale information and calculates the chapter budget and treasurer's report. He also created a database for student records, membership rosters, and mailing information.

Next year, Chad will assist Prairie FFA advisor, Dennis Kinley in a pilot agricultural computer fundamentals course.

Tammy Pilcher
Chowchilla, California

Tammy Pilcher has prepared a program specifically for cattlemen in her state. With a supervised occupational experience program (SOE) of a commercial and purebred cattle operation, Pilcher developed her program out of curiosity in examining price differences and marketing cattle.

Working with several livestock markets, Tammy compiled current market data to create an analysis of regional market prices. She then published the results and mailed them to local cattle associations. As a result, the California Cattlemen's Association have asked her to attend their annual meeting to present her computer program.

Tammy's future plans include expanding her cattle operation while majoring in animal science/marketing at California State University. Her ultimate career goal is unique—marketing of embryos and embryology. "This is an exciting new field that I can apply my talents in my areas of interest: Computers and Cattle!"

Mickey McCall, eastern region vice-president, left, watches Oklahoma Computers in Agriculture winner Danny Grellner test a new software program during a seminar workshop.

Dow Rasdall
Smiths Grove, Kentucky

"The computer facilitates better organization of my SOE program", says Dow Rasdall, of the Warren East, Kentucky FFA. Presently, Dow owns 72 registered Charolais cattle, 25 acres of alfalfa hay, and 77 acres of pasture.

Rasdall uses his TRS-80 Model 1V to write customized programs for his operation. This has allowed Dow to tailor the files to store the data he needs. He uses a purchased spreadsheet program for tattoo numbers, birthdate, purchase price, breeding and artificial insemination dates, along with equipment purchase and repair costs, and corn and hay inventories.

Rasdall's future plans center around computers, agriculture, and engineering. Dow is intrigued by cattle genetics, and would like to write customized programs dealing with this area as well as for agricultural management.

Kirk Snaza
Roslyn, South Dakota

As part owner of S & D Computing, Kirk Snaza has sold the South Dakota computerized record book which he helped program, to over 23 percent of the state's high school agriculture departments.

The Roslyn FFA member has also programmed and developed an agricultural education tutorial program. The program covers various areas of production agriculture and allows agriculture teachers to incorporate computers into everyday classroom work.

Working part-time at the Day County Soil Conservation District, Kirk provided instruction to office personnel on their computer system. Prior to Kirk joining the staff, the office computer sat unused because no one knew how to operate it. Kirk became responsible for computerizing the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) records for the new Conservation Reserve Program. He also developed a database of the highly erodible land in Day County. •••

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Americans At Their Best.

The FFA Foundation's

Three Million Dollar Challenge

and the man who is answering the call of service

By Jeri D. Mattics

Do you remember the proficiency medal you won last spring at your chapter banquet? How about programs like BOAC, Agriscience Student of the Year or national judging contests? Have you ever wondered who paid the bill for these items?

Corporate and private sponsors donate millions of dollars to FFA members every year through the National FFA Foundation.

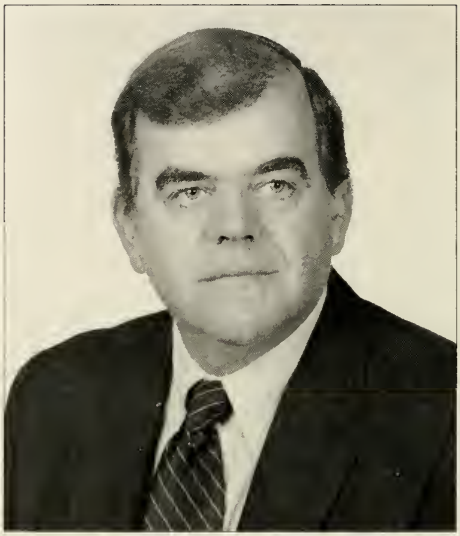
The Foundation is a non-profit corporation whose sole purpose is to channel financial support from business and private contributors to FFA members as incentives to achieve within the organization.

Joe Downey, a corporate vice president of The Dow Chemical U.S.A. and president and chief executive officer of Dow Consumer Products Inc., is one of the key individuals in that process. Downey currently serves as the 1988 National FFA Foundation Sponsors' Board chairman.

Among other duties, the chairman's job is to contact potential corporate sponsors on behalf of the FFA and introduce them to FFA Foundation staff members. He also encourages people from corporations to attend the national FFA convention in Kansas City.

How do corporate executives such as Downey become involved with the Sponsors' Board? How do they view the future of the agricultural industry?

Recently, Joe Downey talked with *The National FUTURE FARMER* about these and other areas of interest to FFA members.



Joe Downey

How did you get involved with the FFA Foundation?

While I was working at Dow's ag products division, I went out to Kansas City to participate in the NAFB's interview program. (The National Association of Farm Broadcasters hold their convention at the same time as the FFA convention.)

On the suggestion of several colleagues, I went over to the FFA convention hall and I've been hooked ever since.

What has impressed you during your year as sponsor's board chairman?

The thing that really sets the FFA apart from other groups is the overall quality of the members. They have a great attitude and are so enthusiastic. Sitting in Municipal Auditorium during the convention sends goose bumps down my spine. The convention experience shows the future in a different light than that which we in business generally see it. I think the biggest reason sponsors support FFA is because of the enthusiasm they see in Kansas City.

How do you expect to raise more money than last year's record-setting mark?

A couple of elements will be responsible for surpassing last year's record-breaking mark of $3.1 million. First is Bernie Staller (executive director of the Foundation). He's one of the most dedicated, organized quality individuals I've ever come across.

The second piece to the puzzle is getting key individuals to Kansas City. That's where the Sponsors' Board members come in. It takes a team effort to convince top corporate executives they should invest a couple of days of travel in an unfamiliar organization.

The key to continue raising donations annually is to reach out to those areas of the industry in which we are not currently active. For instance, we are trying to build sponsorships in the food industry (i.e. food processors and retail merchandisers). Their profits are intricately linked to the availability of raw materials. For instance, McDonald's is dependent upon a plentiful supply of beef, chicken, potatoes and wheat to keep their doors open, but they do not yet support the organization.

What do you see for the future of agriculture and the young people who are interested in it?

As world population expands and international trade barriers dissolve, agriculture becomes a very attractive career area. Right now, there's a bit of an imbalance in the supply and demand of qualified agricultural workers, especially on the professional level. It's a seller's market. Those who are graduating with agricultural degrees are finding themselves in demand.

Like many FFA sponsors, Dow makes a real place in its company

for students through it's intern program. Any advice for students who might one day want to participate in Dow's intern program?

Education is very important. A bachelor's degree is much like a theater ticket. Once you have your ticket, you can choose from a number of shows; but, you've got to earn your ticket first.

I encourage students to pursue a course of study in which they're interested rather than one they see as financially rewarding. You'll get much better grades and generally be a lot happier person.

"A bachelor's degree is much like a theater ticket. Once you have your ticket, you can choose from a number of shows."

Whatever course students take, if they can't communicate, they're of little use to corporate America. No matter what area a person pursues, they're going to have to work with others to complete the task. That's where FFA enters the picture. This organization develops communication and leadership skills that can be attained no where else. Those are the qualities we look for in prospective employees. Grades are important, but so are extracurricular activities and demonstrated communication and leadership abilities. Stay active after high school. You can really polish your skills at the post-secondary (collegiate) level.

What are the biggest challenges you see today's students facing? What suggestions/advice do you have for them?

Keep an open mind and be flexible when it comes to adapting to change. If you don't adapt, you become extinct. We all tend to resist change because its an unknown factor. You've got to be willing to take calculated risks to grow and achieve. One thing that today's students must relize is the many opportunities outside of production agriculture. They're afraid to leave the farm because it would mean crossing into unfamiliar territory.

Also, in a few short years technology will make the world much smaller. What happens in France will be as important as what happens to our neighbor down the road. We must realistically understand the world in which we live and be ready to play the game on an international scale.

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FFA In Action

Three FFA Chapters (advisors and chapter leaders) were honored in the Take Pride in America effort and posed with National President Kelli Evans of Nebraska, center, on the south lawn of the White House after ceremonies there. From left are members and advisors from LaGrange, Fayette County and Raton.

Take Pride In America National Awards for FFA

The Fayette County Chapter from Oak Hill, West Virginia, has been named one of the national winners in the Take Pride In America program of the Federal Government.

Take Pride projects of the Fayette County Chapter include "adopting" a local historical museum for the summer which included clean up and opening it for the season and conducting tours. Also they developed an erosion control plan for their school, and helped with forest fire problems in the community.

They were chosen from the 209 finalists from 540 nominations submitted by state governors. Three FFA nominations had advanced to the finalist round: Fayette County FFA in Oak Hill, West Virginia; Vermont State Association; and Prairie Heights Chapter in LaGrange, Indiana. Raton, New Mexico FFA was a state winner.

On the Farm For Breakfast

Jake and Doris Vesperman, members of the Lancaster, Wisconsin, FFA Alumni, and their family hosted the first "On the Farm" Dairy Breakfast in Grant County, Wisconsin, on Sunday morning June 12, 1988.

The breakfast, sponsored by the FFA Alumni, attracted 2,200 people, almost 1,000 more than were originally planned. Several trips to the local supermarket prevented running out of food.

Breakfast chairman Francis Friar credited the large turnout to good advertisement, support from the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and lots of hard work from the FFA Alumni members. Celebrities on hand included Alice in Dairyland and U.S. Representative Steve Gunderson.

The Lancaster Memorial Hospital hada display booth plus there was a petting zoo, machinery display, lots of door prizes and clowns to entertain the children while the adults toured the Vesperman dairy operation. *(Ginny Snider, Reporter)*

End-of-the-Year Roast

Members of the Alexander, Ohio, FFA, decided to celebrate the end of the school year with a pig roast for all of the members and school faculty. The project was a part of a swine management unit that the members had been working on in class.

The chapter purchased a bred gilt earlier in the year to experience first hand the management needed to care for bred animals and to care for the newborn. The pigs were farrowed at school and members carried out all of the required management practices. At weaning, the litter was distributed to various members of the chapter to be cared for and exhibited at the Athens County Fair in August.

At conclusion of the project, the members slaughtered and roasted a pig. The project was a big success for our chapter and was a great way to end the school year.

Poolside Promotion

The Ysleta, Texas, FFA chapter recently sponsored a summer get-together for all new ag science students coming into the program at Ysleta.

Members were told the goals and purposes of FFA membership and got to meet the new officers and older members. A dance, swimming and hamburger cookout wereenjoyed by 46 members and guests.

Of course no party would be complete without throwing in several members and guests who weren't dressed for swimming.

A See-Through Message

The Clear Lake, Wisconsin, Chapter's Safety Committee organized a winter safety program to promote seat belt use. Members washed car windows throughout the community to remove salt deposits and road grime and improve the driver's visibility. A note from the FFA was left under the windshield wiper encouraging the driver to use the seat belt. *(from the National Chapter Award application)*

(Continued on Page 48)

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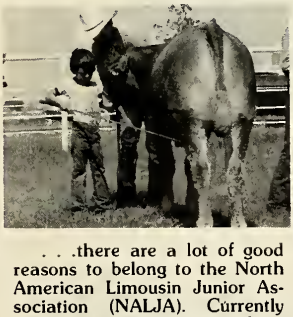

. . .there are a lot of good reasons to belong to the North American Limousin Junior Association (NALJA). Currently over 2,000 Limousin juniors from across the nation are taking advantage of the many youth-oriented programs sponsored by this organization, including low member rates for registration; scholarships; field day sponsorship; and participation in the National Junior Heifer Show, just to name a few.

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Limousin

FFA In Action

Virginia Designates Founding of FFA With Highway Marker

A state historical marker to commemorate the founding of the Future Farmers of Virginia organization has been erected at the Southgate Drive entrance of the Virginia Tech campus.

On June 29, 1988, more than a thousand FFA members and leaders from around the state gathered to dedicate the highway marker during the 62nd annual state FFA convention.

It was at Tech in September 1925 that agricultural educators sat around a wooden table discussing the founding of an organization to give farm boys a greater opportunity for self-expression and for the development of leadership.

Walter S. Newman, later president of Virginia Tech, felt a strong need to start an organization like FFA because farm youth were leaving the farm for other careers. He perceived a feeling of inferiority among farm boys when they went to compete with their urban counterparts. A strong organization of boys in agriculture would help them develop confidence in their own ability.

The other men present, namely, Henry Groseclose, Edmund Magill and Harry Sanders agreed. Groseclose drew up a constitution and by-laws for the fledgling organization, and in 1926 the boys at a state agricultural rally day indicated their desire to form a state organization.

In 1928, Virginians were instrumental in forming the national FFA organization. Henry Groseclose was elected executive treasurer of the first national meeting in Kansas City.

According to agricultural education department staff member Dr. John Hillison, the Virginia Tech agricultural education program has preserved many artifacts associated with the early days of FFA. The wooden table around which the club was organized can still be found in a room in Lane Hall, along with jackets, pins and other memorabilia.

Hot Potato Hotline

FFA members in Limestone, Maine, are operating a placement service to help harvest employers find workers. "The Job Connection" provides an opportunity for students to find part-time employment with area farmers and businesses.

As part of the service, an employment bulletin board listing available jobs is being maintained in the high school lobby. Farmers and other employers looking for workers list openings on the bulletin board by mailing information to the chapter.

FFA members also have collected a list of students looking for employment. Student information such as name, age, address and job preference is kept on a data base using the microcomputer in the agriculture and natural resources classroom. Employers looking for student labor request information from the Job Connection data base by calling the FFA.

The Job Connection is one of the community service projects being conducted by the Limestone FFA as part of their Building Our American Communities Program.

They "Made" Lots of Money

The "Casino Night" held in conjunction with community day activities in June at Genesee, Idaho, was termed a success as a money making project for the FFA chapter there.

Advisor Fabricus purchased a book on games which was the source of information to advise members in making game boards and instructed them in how to play. Members took shifts at the gaming tables throughout the evening.

Play money was made on the computer and duplicated on different colored paper, and packaged into packets of $50. The packets were purchased for $5.00 at the door and money could be spent as individuals desired. At the end of the evening individuals could purchase donated items at the auction with left-over or earned money. All participants and members enjoyed the evening. *(Eric L. Falen, Reporter)*

Big Green Give Away

The Creston, Iowa, Chapter's "Make Crestland Green" project involved a number of conservation efforts. Along with the tree give-a-way the chapter recently completed a four year project involving the planting of 30,050 trees and shrubs within the 12-Mile Creek Watershed project in Union County.

These trees and shrubs replaced all the

wild life habitat that was destroyed during the construction of the 50,030 acre watershed project. All in-school FFA members along with numerous adults

Community residents were kept well informed on our "MAKE CRESTLAND GREEN" activities. Three displays were used in uptown businesses when we gave away 5,500 trees to area residents to help establish wildlife habitats. Each tree was individually packaged in water to ensure survivability until planting.

contributed greatly to the completion of this important four-year project. *(from the National Chapter Award application)*

Holiday Homework

Officers of Elgin, Oklahoma, FFA delivered 125 fruit and nut baskets to the senior citizens during Christmas holidays. The contents of the baskets were brought in by members and assembled in baskets purchased by the chapter. Finally a greeting card was added and the package wrapped in cellophane. One senior citizen wrote, "I'm sending this little note to say how nice it was to be thought of."

(Continued on Page 50)

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FFA In Action

Agri-Tourists

The Gervais, Oregon, chapter held its biennial spring ag tour in June. The chapter toured the Columbia River Basin in the Eastern Oregon and Washington area. The purpose of the tour was to introduce members to different types of farming than they see here in the Willamette Valley.

The chapter had 18 members, parents and alumni attend the tour of farms, ranches and agribusinesses. They toured BB Cattle Company—a ranch in Washington specializing in registered Herefords: Starvation Farms—a farm producing wheat and Shorthorn cattle; Covey Run—a winery in Washington that produces and markets their own wine; Desert Magic and Eastern Oregon Farms—crops include apples, grapes, potatoes, and cherries grown on soil that is almost completely sand; JR Simplot's feedlot—the largest cattle feedlot in Oregon; potato flake plant where whole potatoes are turned into instant potato flakes; and Coors distribution plant. *(Susan Adelman)*

Safety Riders

Over the years ATV's (All Terrain Vehicles) have become increasingly popular, especially in North Iowa. With increased usage, there have been many reports of serious injuries and accidents caused by careless actions involving the use of ATV's. These reports prompted the FFA chapter at Klemme High School, Iowa, to sponsor an ATV safety course.

FFA members were the teachers and coaches for an ATV safety course for elementary students from the community. Once all of the boys were done taking the course, each kid received a picture of himself on the ATV of his choice.

The free ATV safety course held in May was a huge success. Boys in grades two through six learned safety procedures involving ATV's taught to them by nine chapter members. The kids first learned the safety steps that a person should do before riding an ATV.

The boys were required to ride around a circle of cones and weave in and out of a line of cones. Once all of the kids were capable of running through the courses sufficiently, they all took a safety test on what they had learned.

Telling Your Own Story

One of the major challenges facing vocational agriculture and FFA in any community is getting publicity which is favorable to the continued success of the program.

Members of the White House, Tennessee, Chapter recognized this and began work on a master public relations project that would insure that activities of the members and agriculture in general would be recognized and appreciated. The members formed a committee and drafted a week-by-week plan of public relations activities which members should perform.

The plan looks much like a chapter's program of activities, including such areas as SOE recognition, leadership activities and FFA Alumni work. Items such as newspaper articles, radio and television programs, magazine articles, brochures, and public appearances are planned. To date the program has been very successful, with our chapter gaining a tremendous amount of coverage from the media and recognition from the community. *(from the National Chapter Award application)*

"How-to" Example for Celebrating Chapter's 50th Anniversary

Just as it was 50 years ago, Buhler, Kansas, is still a farming community. And the FFA chapter there is still dedicated to training young people for futures in agriculture and agribusiness.

History of the Buhler FFA Chapter and its progressive program were reviewed as five charter members joined other past and present FFA'ers to celebrate the chapter's golden anniversary this spring.

Scrapbooks, record books, photographs and awards representing nearly every year in the Chapter's life were on display in the school for the 230 banquet guests to browse through.

The chapter's 1988 award-winning farm mechanics projects, along with several pieces of shop-built equipment from earlier years, were intermingled in a shop and parking lot display.

Five of the 19 charter members were in attendance. They included Irvin Schroeder and Elmer Gaeddert, both still of Buhler; Irven Ediger, Burrton; Orville Field, Hutchinson; and Edwin Dirks, Wichita.

A slide show, complete with a music soundtrack of "Old McDonald Had a Farm," included historical photographs of past and present members with projects and in activities at the time of their FFA membership.

Former National FFA President Mark Mayfield, serving as the first national president from Kansas in 1973-74 and now a fulltime convention and banquet speaker, was featured in the program.

Roast beef with all of the trimmings was prepared by a former chapter member and 1983 State Farmer degree recipient. "The FFA members work throughout the year to earn money so we don't have to charge for this banquet. We invite our families and friends from the community to enjoy the evening with us," noted Advisor Wedel.

Averaging more than one State Farmer degree recipient for each year in existence, there have been 53 State Farmers and three American Farmer degree recipients from the Buhler Chapter.

There are five State Farmers this year, and Chris Zeller will receive his American Farmer degree.

The first State Farmer from the Buhler FFA was in attendance at the chapter's 50th birthday. Leo Ediger wasn't a charter member, but he joined the next year and received his State Farmer degree in 1941. His interest and service to FFA have remained steadfast throughout the years and he is presently serving as an advisory board member.

Ediger's old FFA record books attracted lots of attention. Well-preserved, the farm records indicated a vast difference between the economy then and now. *(Frank J. Buchman)* •••

My Turn

with

Kevin Odsney

As I write this article, my mind drifts back to State Presidents' Conference and my memorable visit to the Smithsonian Institute's National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C. Nowhere in the world can you find more noteworthy examples of human creativity, innovation, and courage!

My parents and I spent several hours looking through the exhibits. We gazed at the Spirit of St. Louis—the first plane to successfully fly across the Atlantic. We looked at the Bell X-I which was the first aircraft to break the speed of sound and we saw Gemini II—the spaceship in which John Glenn orbited the earth.

As we wandered throughout the museum, it dawned on me that the principles that enabled Neil Armstrong to walk on the moon and Chuck Yeager to break the speed of sound are the same principles we must use in leading our organization—the ability to dream "impossible" dreams, the willingness to take calculated risk and the courage to embrace change and explore new frontiers.

"We must trade our rear view mirrors in for telescopes to look beyond today and into our organization's future."

This philosophy was even more evident after watching the film "The Dream Is Alive"— a film depicting the opportunities and challenges of the Space Shuttle Program. Even in spite of the 1986 Challenger tragedy, the dream is, indeed, still alive!

In fact, while I write this article, the space Shuttle Discovery's solid rocket boosters are being tested in order to prepare it for its October launching.

Another historic launching will be taking place this fall, but instead of Cape Canaveral, this blast-off will occur in Kansas city! Thousands of FFA members will ignite the Municipal Auditorium with enthusiasm as the FFA organization launches into its 61st year.

However, just as engineers have carefully modified and improved the space shuttle, we, too, must adapt and improve our organization to insure its successful voyage into the 21st Century. Undoubtedly, the agricultural world has expanded since our organization's beginnings in 1928.

Therefore, we must equip our "voyager" with the ability to respond to these changing needs. It is with this in mind that the National Board of directors has proposed 19 amendments to the National FFA Constitution and Bylaws to be considered by the delegates at the 61st National Convention.

By no means are these amendments designed to jeopardize the principles that have been responsible for our 60 years of success. Instead, the purpose of these proposals is to equip our organization with the constitutional structure that will enable us to remain successful in the 21st Century.

In Proverbs 29:18 it warns, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." As FFA members and young agriculturalists, we must be visionaries. We must trade our rear view mirrors in for telescopes to look beyond today and into our organization's future. By doing this at the local, state and national level, we can successfully launch our organization into the 21st Century!

"My turn" is over. Now it's *your* turn to "Keep The Dream Alive!" •••

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Joke Page

Some little mice died and went to heaven. After they had been there a while, God asked if everything was all right. The mice complained that heaven was so big it took them forever to get around. So God fitted them with roller skates. Soon Felix, the cat, also died and went to heaven. After a few days God checked with him to see if all was well. *"Oh, wonderful!"* replied Felix. *"I particularly enjoy the meals on wheels!"*

Marguerite Reasner
Indianapolis, Indiana

Q: What do you call a rabbit with fleas?
A. Bugs Bunny

Debbie Coplen
Olympia, Washington

Q: Why are there no psychiatrists for dogs?
A: Everyone knows dogs aren't allowed on couches.

Stacy Johnson
Shorter, Alabama

"Our exchange student from Egypt stacked the bales.

People say that fleas are small and black, but I know that's not true because Mary had a little lamb and her fleas were white as snow.

Heath Brown
Glen Rose, Texas

Q: How do insects communicate?
A: With buzz words.

Cindy Mancebo
Chowchilla, California

Farmer's Wife: *"We're gonna remember 1988 as a terrible dry year."*
Farmer: *"Yeh, but it's always been dry here in this county. Back when it rained for 40 days and 40 nights, we only got a half inch."*

Darin Blunier
Princeville, Illinois

The young Mother put her children to bed, changed into a sweat shirt and old jeans, and started to wash her hair. During the shampoo, she heard the children arguing. She wrapped a large towel around her head, stormed into the room, and sternly warned them to go to sleep. As she left the room she heard one say to the other in a weak, trembling voice, *"Who in the world was that?"*

Ben Shuster
Pilot Grove, Missouri

Farmer: *"Do you know of any animal doctors in town?"*
Nurse: *"No. All the doctors I know are people."*

Penny Pierce
Texico, New Mexico

Junior: *"Daddy, are the people down the block poor?"*
Dad: *"I don't think so."*
Junior: *"Then why did they make such a big fuss when their baby swallowed a quarter?"*

Matt Shuman
Springfield, Ohio

Mike: *"Does your butcher sell good meat?"*
Dan: *"Yes, he wouldn't give anybody a bum steer."*

Mikal Kent
Weston, Idaho

Charlie, the Greenhand

"Yes, the John Deere is definitely you!"

NOTICE: *The National FUTURE FARMER will pay $5.00 for each joke selected for this page. Jokes must be addressed to The National FUTURE FARMER, P.O. Box 15160, Alexandria, VA 22309, or via Stargram on the Ag Ed Network to FF100A. In case of duplication, payment will be for the first one received. Contributions cannot be acknowledged or returned.*

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